

THE
HISTORY
OF
KING
LEAR,
Acted at the
Queens Theatre.

Revived with Alterations.

By N. TATE.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Rich. Wellington, at the Dolphin and Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard, and E. Rumbold at the Post House, Covent Garden; and Tho. Osborne at Grays-Inn, near the Walks.

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Quercus Thunbergii

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SIR,

YOU have a natural Right to this Piece, since by your Advice I attempt-
ed the Revival of it with Alterations. Nothing but the Pow'r of your
Persuasions, and my Zeal for all the Remains of Shakespear, cou'd have
wrought me to so bold an Undertaking. I found that the New-mo'delling
of this Story, wou'd force me sometimes on the difficult Task of making the chiefest
Persons speak something like their Charracter, on Matter whereof I had no Ground
in my Author. Lear's real and Edgar's pretended Madness have so much of ex-
travagant Nature, (I know not how else to express it,) as cou'd never have start-
ed but from our Shakespear's Creating Fancy. The Images and Language are so
odd and surprizing, and yet so agreeable and proper, that whilst we grant that none
but Shakespear cou'd have form'd such Conceptions; yet we are satisfied that they
were the only Things in the World that ought to be said on those Occasions. I found
the whole to answer your account of it, a Heap of Jewels, unstrung, and unpolish'd;
yet so dazzling in their Disorder, that I soon perceiv'd I had seiz'd a Treasure. 'Twas
my good Fortune to light on one Expedient to rectify what was wanting in the Re-
gularity and Probability of the Tale, which was to run through the whole, as Love be-
twixt Edgar and Cordelia; that never chang'd word with each other in the Ori-
ginal. This renders Cordelia's Indifference, and her Fathers Passion in the first
Scene, probable. It likewise gives Countenance to Edgar's Disguise, making that
a generous Design that was before a poor Shift to save his Life. The Distress of the
Story is evidently heightned by it; and it particularly gave Occasion of a New Scene
or Two, of more Success (perhaps) than Merit. This method necessarily threw me
on making the Tale conclude in a Success to the innocent distressed Persons: Otherwise
I must have incumbered the Stage with dead Bodies, which Conduct makes many
Tragedies conclude with unseasonable Fests. Yet was I wrack with no small Fear;
for so bold a Change, till I found it well receiv'd by my Audience; and if this will
not satisfy the Reader, I can produce an Authority that questionless will. Neither
is it of so Trivial an Undertaking to make a Tragedy end
happily, for 'tis more difficult to save than 'tis to Kill: Mr. Dryd. Pref.
The Dagger and Cup of Poison are always in Readiness; to the Spanish
but to bring the Action to the last Extremity, and then by Fryer.

probable Means to recover All, will require the Art and
Judgment of a Writer, and cost him many a Pang in the Performance.
I have one thing more to apologize for, which is that I have us'd less Quaintness
of Expression even in the Newest Parts of this Play. I confess, 'twas Design in
me, partly to comply with my Authors Style, to make the Scenes of a Piece, and
partly to give it some Resemblance of the Time and Persons here Represented.
This, Sir, I submit wholly to you, who are both a Judge and Master of Style. Na-
ture had exempted you before you went Abroad from the Microse Saturnine Humour
of our Country, and you brought home the Refinedness of Travel without the Af-
fectionation. Many faults I see in the following Pages, and question not but you will
discover more; yet I will presume so far on your Friendship, as to make the whole
a Present to you, and Subscribe my self.

Your obliged Friend
and humble Servant,

N. Tate.

PROLOGUE.

*Since by Mistakes your best delights are made,
 (For e'en your Wives can please in Masquerade,)
 'Twere not h our w ble. to have drawn you in this Day
 By a new Name to our old honest Play;
 But he that did this Evenings Treat prepare
 Blunt y resolvd before hand to declare
 Your Entertainment should be most old Fare.
 Yet hopes, since in rich Shakespear's soil it grew
 'Twill relish yet, with those whose Tasts are true,
 And his Ambition is to please a Few.
 If then this Heap of Flow'rs shall chance to wear
 Fresh beauty in the O der they now bear,
 Even this Shakespear's Praise; each rustick knows
 'Mongst plenteous Flow'rs a Garland to Compose
 Which strung by this Course Hand may fairer show;
 But 'twas a Power Divine first made 'em grow,
 Why shou'd these Scenes lie hid, in which we find
 What may at once divert and teach the Mind;
 Morals were always proper for the Stage,
 But are ev'n necessary in th's Age
 Poet. must take the Churches Teaching Trade,
 Since Pri'sts their Province of Intrigue invade;
 But we the worst in this Exchange have got,
 In vain our Poets Preach, whilst Churchmen Plot.*

The Persons.

*King Lear,
 Gloster,
 Kent,
 Edgar,
 Bastard,
 Cornwall,
 Albany,*

*Mr. Betterton.
 Mr Gillo.
 Mr. Wiltshire,
 Mr. Smith.
 Mr. Jo. Williams.
 Mr. Norris.
 Mr. Bowman.*

*Gentleman-Usher,
 Goneril,
 Regan,
 Cordelia,*

*Mr. Tervon.
 Mrs. Shadwel.
 Lady Slingsby.
 Mrs. Barry.*

Guards, Officers, Messengers, Attendants.

KING LEAR.

A

TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

Enter Bastard solus.

Bast. **T**HOU Nature art my Goddess, to thy Law
 My Services are bound; Why am I then
 Deprived of a Son's Right, because I came not
 In the dull Road that Custom has prescrib'd?
 Why Bastard, wherefore Base, when I can boast
 A Mind as gen'rous, and a shape as true
 As honest Madam's Issue? Why are we
 Held Base, who in the lusty stealth of Nature
 Take fiercer Qualities than what compound
 The scant'd Births of the stale Marriage-bed;
 Well then, legitimate *Edgar*, to thy Right
 Of Law I will oppose a Bastards Cunning.
 Our Father's Love is to the Bastard *Edmund*
 As to legitimate *Edgar*: with success
 I've practis'd yet on both their easie Natures:
 Here comes the old Man chaf't with th' Information
 Which last I forg'd against my Brother *Edgar*,
 A Tale so plausible, so boldly utter'd,
 And heightned by such lucky Accidents,
 That now the slightest circumstance confirms him,
 And base-born *Edmund* spight of Law inherits.

Enter Kent and Gloster.

Gloster. Nay, good my Lord, your Charity
 O'er shoots it self to plead in his behalf;
 You are your self a Father, and may feel
 The sting of disobedience from a Son
 First-born and best lov'd: Oh Villain *Edgar*!

Kent. Be not too rash, all may be forgery,
 And time yet clear the Duty of your Son.

Gloster. Plead with the Seas, and reason down the Winds,
 Yet shall thou ne'er convince me, I have seen
 His foul Designs through all a Father's fondness:
 But be this Light and thou my Witnesses,

That

That I discar'd him hear from my Possessions,
Divorce him from my Heart, my Blood, and Name.

Bast. It works as I cou'd wish; I'll shew my self.

Gloſt. Ha! *Edmund!* wellcome Boy, O *Kent!* see here
Inverted Nature, *Gloſter's* Shame and Glory,
This By-born, the wild fall'y of my Youth,
Pursues me with all filial Offices,
Whilst *Edgar*, begg'd of Heaven, and born in Honour,
Draws Plagues on my white Head, that urge me still
To curse in Age the Pleasure of my Youth.
Nay, weep not, *Edmund*, for thy Brother's crimes;
O gen'rous Boy! thou shar'st but half his Blood,
Yet lov'st beyond the kindness of a Brother:
But I'll reward thy Vertue. Follow me.
My Lord, you wait the King, who comes resolv'd
To quit the Toils of Empire, and divide
His Realms amongst his Daughters; Heaven succeed it;
But much I fear the Change.

Kent. I grieve to see him
With such wild starts of Passion hourly seiz'd,
As render Majesty between it self.

Gloſt. Alas! 'tis the Infirmary of his Age,
Yet has his Temper even been unfixt,
Chol'rick and sudden; hark, they approach.

[*Exeunt Gloſt. and Bast.*

Flourish. Enter Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Burgundy, Edgar, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia, Edgar *speaking to Cordelia at Entrance.*

Edgar. Cordelia, Royal Fair, turn yet once more,
And e'er successful *Burgundy* receive
The treasure of thy Beauties from the King,
E'er happy *Burgundy* for ever fold Thee,
Cast back one pitying Look on a wretched *Edgar*.

Cord. Alas! What wou'd the wretched *Edgar* with
The more unfortunate *Cordelia*?
Who in obedienc to a Fathers Will
Flies from her *Edgar's* Arms to *Burgundy's*?

Lear. Attend my Lords of *Albany* and *Cornwall*,
With Princely *Burgundy*.

Alb. We do, my Liege.

Lear. Give me this Map. — Know, Lords, we have divided
In Three, our Kingdom, having now resolv'd
To disengage from Our long Toil of State,
Conferring all upon your younger years;
You *Burgundy*, *Cornwall* and *Albany*,
Long in Our Court have made your amorous sojourn,
And now are to be Answer'd.—Tell me, my Daughters,

Which,

Which of you loves Us most, that We may place
Our largest Bounty with our largest Merit.

Goneril, Our Eldest-born, I speak first.

Gen. Sir, I do love you more than words can utter,
Beyond what can be valu'd Rich, or Rare;
Nor Liberty, nor Sight, Health, Fame, or Beauty,
Are half so dear, my Life for you were vile,
As much as Child can love the best of Fathers.

Lear. Of all these Bounds, e'en from this Line to this,
With shady Forests, and wide-skirted Meads,
We make thee Lady; to thine and *Albany's* Issue
Be this perpetual. — What says our Second Daughter?

Reg. My Sister, Sir, in part exprest my Love.
For such as Hers, is mine, though more extended;
Sense has no other Joy that I can relish,
I have my All in my dear Liege's Love.

Lear. Therefore to thee and thine Hereditary
Remain this Ample Third of our fair Kingdom.

Cord. Now comes my Trial, How am I distressed,
That must with cold speech tempt the Chol'rick King
Rather to leave me Dowerless; then condemn me
To loath'd Embraces.

[*Aside.*

Lear. Speak now our last, not least in Our dear Love,
So ends my Task of State, — *Cordelia*, speak;
What canst thou say to win a richer Third
Than what thy Sisters gain'd?

Cord. Now must my Love in words fall short of theirs
As much as it exceeds in Truth, — Nothing, my Lord.

Lear. Nothing can come of Nothing, speak agen.

Cord. Unhappy am I that I cannot dissemble,
Sir, as I ought I love your Majesty,
No more nor less.

Lear. Take heed, *Cordelia*,
Thy Fortunes are at stake, think better on't,
And mend thy Speech a little.

Cord. O my Liege!
You gave me Being, bred me, dearly love me,
And I return my Duty as I ought,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you;
Why have my Sisters Husbands, if they love you All?
Haply When I shall wed, the Lord whose Hand
Shall take my Plight, will carry half my Love;
For I shall never Marry like my Sisters,
To love my Father All.

Lear. And goes thy Heart with this?
'Tis said that I am Chol'rick, Judge me, Gods,

8 KING LEAR.
Is their not cause? Now, Minion, I perceive
The Truth of what has been suggested to Us;
Thy fondness for the Rebel Son of *Gloster*,
False to his Father, as thou art to my Hopes:
And, oh! take heed, rash Girl, lest we comply
With thy fond wishes, which thou wilt too late
Repent; for know, Our Nature cannot brook
A Child so young, and so ungentile.

Cord. So young, my Lord, and True.

Lear. Thy Truth then be thy Dow'r;
For by the sacred Sun, and solemn Night,
I here disclaim all my paternal Care,
And from this minute hold thee as a Stranger
Both to my Blood and Favour.

Kent. This is Frenzy.
Consider, good my Liege, ———

Lear. Peace, *Kent*;
Come not between a Dragon and his Rage;
I lov'd her most, and in her tender Trust
Design'd to have bestow'd my Age at Ease:
So be my Grave my Peace, as here I give
My Heart from her, and with it all my Wealth:
My Lords of *Cornwall*, and of *Albany*,
I do invest you jointly in full Right
In this fair Third, *Cordelia's* forfeit Dow'r.
Mark me, my Lords, observe Our last resolve,
Our Self, attended with an hundred Knights,
Will make Abode with you in monthly Course;
The Name alone of King remain with me,
Yours be the Execution and Revenues;
This is our final Will, and to confirm it,
This Coronet part between you.

Kent. Royal *Lear*,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my King,
Lov'd as my Father, as my Master follow'd,
And, as my Patron, thought on in my Prayers, ———

Lear. Away, the Bow is bent, make from the Shaft.

Kent. No, let it fall and drench within my Heart,
Be *Kent* unmannerly when *Lear* is mad:
Thy youngest Daughter ———

Lear. On my Life no more.

Kent. What wilt thou do, old Man?

Lear. Out of my Sight.

Kent. See better first.

Lear. Now by the gods, ———

Kent. Now by the gods, rash King, thou swear'st in vain.

Lear.

Lear. Ha Traytor! —

Kent. Do, kill thy Physician, *Lear* ;
Strike through my Throat, yet with my latest Breath
I'll thunder in thine Ear my just Complaint,
And tell Thee to thy Face that thou dost ill.

Lear. Hear me, rash Man ; on thy Allegiance heare me ;
Since thou hast striv'n to make Us break our Vow,
And prest between our Sentence and our Pow'r,
Which nor our Nature nor our Place can bear,
We banish thee for ever from our Sight
And Kingdom ; if when Three days are expir'd,
Thy hated Trunk be found in our Dominions,
That moment is thy Death ; Away.

Kent. Why fare thee well, King ; since thou art resolv'd,
I take thee at thy word, and will not stay,
To see Thy Fall : the Gods protect the Maid
That truly thinks, and has most justly said.
Thus to new Climates my old truth I bear,
Friendship lives Hence, and Banishment is here.

[Exit.

Lear. Now, *Burgundy*, you see her price is faln,
Yet if the fondness of your Passion still
Affects her as she stands, Dow'rless, and lost
In our Esteem, she's yours ; take her, or leave her.

Burg. Pardon me, Royal *Lear*, I but demand
The Dow'r your self propos'd. and here I take
Cordelia by the Hand, Dutcheß of *Burgunly*.

Lear. Then Leave her, Sir, for by a Father's rage
I tell you all her Wealth. Away.

Burg. Then, Sir, be pleas'd to charge the breach
Of our Alliance on your own Will,
Not my Inconstancy.

[Exeunt. *Manet* Edgar and *Cordelia*.

Edg. Has Heaven then weigh'd the merit of my Love,
Or is't the raving of my sickly thought ?
Cou'd *Burgundy* forgoe so rich a Prize,
And leave her to despairing *Edgar's* Arms ?
Have I thy hand *Cordelia* ? Do I clasp it ?
The Hand that was this minute to have joyn'd
My hated Rival's ? Do I kneel before thee,
And offer at thy Feet my panting Heart ?
Smile, Princess, and convince me ; for as yet
I doubt, and dare not trust the dazling Joy.

Cord. Some Comfort yet, that 'twas no vicious Blot
That has depriv'd me of a Father's Grace,
But meerly want of that which makes me rich
In wanting it ; a smooth professing Tongue :

O Sisters! I am loth to call your fault
As it deserves; but use our Father well,
And wrong'd *Cordelia* never shall repine.

Edg. O heav'nly Maid! that art thy self thy Dow'r
Richer in vertue then the Stars in Light;
If *Edgar's* humble Fortunes may be grac't
With thy Acceptance, at thy Feet he lays 'em.
Ha, my *Cordelia*! dost thou turn away?
What have I done t' offend Thee?

Cord. Talk't of Love.

Edg. Then I've offended oft, *Cordelia* too.
Has oft permitted me so to offend.

Cord. When, *Edgar*, I permitted your Adresses,
I was the darling Daughter of a King,
Nor can I now forget my Royal Birth,
And live dependant on my Lovers Fortune;
I cannot to so low a Fate submit;
And therefore study to forget your Passion,
And trouble me upon this Theme no more.

Edg. Thus Majesty takes most State in Distress!
How are we tost on Fortune's fickle floud!
The Wave that with surprising Kindness brought
The dear wreck to my Arms, has snatcht it back,
And left me mourning on the barren Shoar.

Cord. This Baseness of th' ignoble *Burgundy*,
Draws just suspicion on the Race of Men;
His Love was Int'rest, so may *Edgar's* be,
And He, but with more Complement, dissemble;
If so, I shall oblige him by denying:
But if his Love be fixt, such constant Flame
As warms our Breasts, if such I find his Passion,
My Heart as greatful to his Truth shall be,
And could *Cordelia* prove as Kind as He.

[*Aside.*

[*Exit.*

Enter Bastard hastily.

B. st. Brother, I've found you in a lucky minute,
Fly and be safe, some Villain has incens'd
Our Father against your Life.

Edg. Distress *Cordelia*! but, oh! more Cruel.

B. st. Hear me, Sir, your Life, your Life's in Danger.

Edg. A Resolve so sudden
And of such black Importance!

B. st. 'Twas not sudden,
Some Villain has of long time laid the Train.

Edg. And yet perhaps 'twas but pretended Coldness,
To try how far my Passion would pursue.

B. st. He hears me not; wake, wake, Sir.

Edg.

Edg. Say ye, Brother? — — —

No Tears, good *Edmund*, if thou bringest me Tydings
To strike me dead, for Charity delay not,
That Present will besit so kind a Hand.

Bast. Your danger, Sir, comes on so fast,
That I want time t' inform you; but retire
Whilst I take care to turn the pressing Stream.
O gods! for Heav'n's sake, Sir.

Edg. Pardon me, Sir, a serious Thought
Had seiz'd me, but I think you talkt of danger,
And wisht me to retire; Must all our Vows
End thus? — Friend, I obey you. — O *Cordelia*!

[Exit.

Bast. Ha! ha! fond Man, such credulous Honesty
Lessens the Glory of my Artifice;
His Nature is so far from doing wrongs,
That he suspects none: If this Letter speed,
And pass for *Edgar*'s, as himself wou'd own
The Counterfeit, but for the foul Contents,
Then my designs are perfect. — Here comes *Gloster*.

Enter Gloster.

Glost. Stay, *Edmund*, turn; What Paper were you reading?

Bast. A Trifle, Sir.

Glost. What needed then that terrible dispatch of it
Into your Pocket? Come, produce it, Sir.

Bast. A Letter from my Brother, Sir, I had
Just broke the Seal, but knew not the Contents;
Yet, fearing they might prove too blame,
Endeavour'd to conceal it from your sight.

Glost. 'Tis *Edgar*'s Character.

[Reads.

*This Policy of Fathers is intolerable, that keeps our Fortunes fr m
us till Age will not suffer us to enjoy 'em; I am weary of the
Tyranny: Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our
Father would sleep till I wak'd him, you should enjoy half his
Possessions, and live beloved of your Brother*

Edgar.

Slept till I wak'd him! you shou'd enjoy
Half his Possessions! — *Edgar* to write this
'Gainst his indulgent Father! Death and Hell!
Fly, *Edmund*, seek him out, wind me into him,
That I may bite the Traytor's Heart, and fold
His bleeding Entrals on my vengeful Arm.

Bast. Perhaps 'twas writ, my Lord, to prove my Vertue.

Glost. These late Eclipses of the Sun and Moon
Can bode no less; Love cools, and Friendship fails,
In Cities Mutiny, in Countries Discord,
The bond of Nature crack't 'twixt Son and Father:

Find out the Villain; do it carefully,
And it shall lose thee nothing.

[Exit.

Bast. So, now my Project's firm; but to make sure
I'll throw in one proof more, and that a bold one;
I'll place old *Gloster* where he shall o'er-hear us
Confer of this Design; whilst, to his thinking,
Deluded *Edgar* shall accuse himself.
Be Honesty my Interest, and I can
Be honest too: And what Saint so Divine,
That will successful Villany decline?

[Exit.

Enter Kent disguised.

Kent. Now, banish *Kent*, if thou canst pay thy Duty
In this disguise, where thou dost stand condemn'd,
Thy Master *Lear* shall find thee full of Labours.

Enter Lear attended.

Lear. In there, and tell our Daughter we are here.
Now, What art Thou?

Kent. A Man, Sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess, or wou'dst with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem, to serve him truly that
puts me in Trust, to love him that's honest, to converse with him
that's wise and speaks little, to fight when I can't chuse; and to eat
no Fish.

Lear. I say, What art Thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the King.

Lear. Then art thou poor indeed. — What canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest Counsel; mar a curious Tale in the tel-
ling, deliver a plain Message bluntly; that which ordinary Men are
fit for, I am qualify'd in; and the best of me is Diligence.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me.

Enter one of Goneril's Gentlemen.

Now Sir?

Gent. Sir — — — [Exit; *Kent runs after him.*

Lear. What says the Fellow? Call me the Clodpole back.

Att. My Lord, I know not; but methinks your Highness is en-
tertained with slender Ceremony.

Servant. He says, my Lord, your Daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the Slave back when I call'd him?

Serv. My Lord, he answered me i' th' surliest manner,
That he wou'd not.

Re-enter Gentleman brought in by Kent.

Lear. I hope our Daughter did not so instruct him;
Now, who am I, Sir?

Gent. My Ladies Father.

Lear. My Lord's Knave. —

[Strikes him.
[Goneril

[Goneril at the Entrance.

Gon. By Day and Night, this is insufferable,
I will not bear it.

Lear. Now, Daughter, why that frontlet on?
Speak, do's that Frown become our Presence?

Gent. I'll not be struck, my Lord.

Kent. Nor tript neither, thou vile Civet-box.

[Strikes up his heels.

Gon. Sir, this licentious Insolence of your Servants
Is most unseemly, hourly they break out
In quarrels bred; by making this known to you,
I thought t' have had a Redress, but find too late
That you protect and countenance their out-rage;
And therefore, Sir, I take this freedom, which
Necessity makes Discreet.

Lear. Are you our Daughter?

Gon. Come, Sir, let me entreat you to make use
Of your discretion, and put off betimes
This Disposition that of late transforms you
From what you rightly are.

Lear. Do's any here know me? why, this is not Lear;
Do's Lear walk thus? speak thus? where are his Eyes?
Who is it that can tell me who I am?

Gon. Come, Sir, this Admiration's much o' th' favour
Of other your new humours; I beseech you
To understand my purposes aright;
As you are old, you shou'd be staid and wise:
Here do you keep an hundred Knights and Squires,
Men so debauched and bold, that this our Palace
Shews like a riotous Inn, a Tavern, Brothel;
Be then advis'd by her that else will take
That which she begs, to lessen your Attendance,
Take half away, and see that the remainder
Be such as may besit your Age, and know
Themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and Devils!
Saddle my Horses, call my Train together;
Degenerate Viper, I'll not stay with Thee!
I yet have left a Daughter.—— Serpent, Monster!
Lessen my Train, and call 'em riotous?
All men approv'd, of choice and rarest Parts,
That each particular of duty know.——
How small, Cordelia, was thy Fault? O Lear,
Beat at this Gate that let thy Folly in,
And thy dear Judgment out; Go, go, my People!

[Going

[Going off meets Albany entering.]

Ingrateful Duke, was this your will?

Alb. what, Sir?

Lear. Death! fifty of my Followers at a clap!

Alb. The matter, Madam?

Gon. Never afflict your self to know the Cause,
But give his Dotage way.

Lear. Blasts upon thee,

Th' untented woundings of a Father's Curse
Pierce ev'ry sense about Thee; old fond Eyes,
Lament this Cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
And cast ye with the Waters that ye loose
To Temper Clay. — No, *Gorgon*, thou shalt find
That I'll resume the Shape which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever.

Gon. Mark ye that.

Lear. Hear Nature!

Dear Goddess hear; and if thou dost intend
To make that Creature fruitful, change thy purpose;
Pronounce upon her Womb the Barren Curse,
That from her blasted Body never spring
A Babe to honour her; — But if she must bring forth,
Defeat her Joy with some distorted Birth,
Or Monstrous Form, the Prodigy o' th' Time,
And so perverse of Spirit, that it may live
Her Torment as 'twas Born, to fret her Cheeks
With constant Tears, and wrinkle her young Brow.
Turn all her Mother's Pains to Shame and Scorn,
That she may curse her Crime too late, and feel
How sharper thron a Serpent's Tooth it is
To have a Thankless Child: Away, away.

[Exit cum suis.]

Gon. Presuming thus upon his numerous Train,
He thinks to ploy the Tyrant here, and hold
Our Lives at will.

Alb. Well, you may bear too far.

End of the First Act.

[Ex.]

ACT II.

SCENE, *Gloster's House.*

Enter Bastard.

Bast. **T**HE Duke comes here to Night, I'll take advantage
Of his Arrival to complete my project:
Brother, a Word, come forth; 'tis I your Friend, *[Enter Edgar.]*
My Father watches for you, fly this place,

Intelli-

Intelligence is giv'n where you're hid;
Take the advantage of the Night; bethink ye;
Have you not spoke against the Duke of Cornwall
Something might shew you a favourer of
Duke Albany's Party?

Edg. Nothing; why ask you?

Bast. Because he's coming here to Night in haste,
And Regan with him—Hark! the Guards; away.

Edg. Let 'em come on, I'll stay and clear my self.

Bast. Your Innocence at leisure may be heard,
But Gloucester's storming rage as yet is deaf,
And you my perish e'er allow'd the hearing.

[Ex. Edgar.]

Gloucester comes yonder: now to my feign'd Scuffle——

Yield, come before my Father! Lights here, Lights!

Some Blood drawn on me wou'd beget opinion

[Stabs his Arm.]

Of our more fierce Encounter.—— I have seen

Drunkards do more than this in sport.

{ Enter Gloucester
and Servants.

[lost] Now, Edmund, where's the Trator?

Bast. That Name, Sir,
Strikes Horror through me; but my Brother, Sir,
Stood here i' the' Dark.

Gloucester. Thou bleed'st! pursue the Villain.
And bring him peace-meal to me.

Bast. Sir, he's fled.

Gloucester. Let him fly far, this Kingdom shall not hide him:
The Noble Duke, my Patron, comes to Night;
By his Authority I will proclaim
Rewards for him that brings him to the Stage,
And Death for the Concealer.

Then of my Lands, loyal and natural Boy,
I'll work the means to make thee capable.

[Exeunt.]

Enter Kent (disguis'd still) and Goneril's Gentleman, severally.

Gent. Good morrow Friend, belongst thou to this House?

Kent. Ask them will answer thee.

Gent. Where may we set our Horses?

Kent. I'th' Mire.

Gent. I am in haste, prethee an' thou lov'st me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Gent. Why then I care not for Thee.

Kent. An' I had thee in Lipsbury Pinfold, I'd make thee care for me.

Gent. What do'st thou mean? I know thee not.

Kent. But, Minion, I know Thee.

Gent. What do'st thou know me for?

Kent. For a base, proud, beggarly, white-liver'd, glass-gazing,
superferviceable finical Rogue; one that wou'd be a Pimp in way of
good

Good Service, and art nothing but a composition of Knave, Beggar, Coward, Pandar. —

Gent. What a monstrous Fellow art thou to rail at one that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee?

Kent. Impudent Slave! not know me, who but two days since tript up thy heels before the King: Draw, Miscreant, or I'll make the Moon shine through thee.

Gent. What means the Fellow? — Why prethee, prethee; I tell thee I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. I know your Rogueries Office; you come with Letters against the King, taking my young Lady *Vanity's* part against her Royal Father: Draw, Rascal.

Gent. Murther, murther, help.

[*Exit. Kent after him*]

Flourish. Enter Duke of Cornwall, Regan, attended; Gloster, Bastard.

Gloster. All Wellcome to your Graces, you do me honour.

Duke. Gloster, W've heard with sorrow that your Life Has been attempted by your Impious Son: But *Edmund* here has paid you Strictest Duty.

Gloster. He did betray his Practise, and receiv'd The Hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Duke. Is he pursu'd?

Gloster. He is, my Lord.

Reg. Use our Authority to apprehend The Traytor, and do Justice on his Head; For you, *Edmund*, that have so signaliz'd Your Vertue, you from hence forth shall be ours; Natures of such firm Trust we much shall need, A Charming youth, and worth my farther Thought.

[*Aside.*]

Duke. Lay comforts, noble *Gloster*, to your Breast, As we to ours, This Night be spent in Revels, We chuse you, *Gloster*, for our host to Night, A troublesome expression of our Love. On, to the Sports before us. — Who are these?

Enter the Gentleman pursu'd by Kent.

Gloster. Now, what's the matter?

Duke. Keep peace upon your Lives, he dies that strikes. Whence, and what are ye?

Att. Sir, they are Messengers, the one from your Sister, The other from the King.

Duke. Your difference? Speak.

Gent. I'm scarce in breath, my Lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestir'd your Valour. Nature disclaims the Dastard; a Taylor made him.

Duke.

Duke. Speak yet, how grew your Quarrel?

Gent. Sir, This old Ruffian here, whose Life I spar'd
In pity to his Beard. ———

Kent. Thou Escence Bottle!

In pity to my Beard ——— Your leave my Lord,
And I will tread the Muff-cat into Mortar.

Duke. Know'st thou our presence?

Kent. Yes, Sir, but Anger has a Privilege,

Duke. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a Slave as this shou'd were a Sword
And have no Courage; Office, and no Honesty;
Not Frost and Fire hold more Antipathy
Than I and such a Knave.

Gloster. Why dost thou call him Knave?

Kent. His Countenance likes me not.

Duke. No more perhaps does Mine, nor His, or Hers.

Kent. Plain dealing is my Trade, and to be plain, Sir,
I have seen better Faces in my time,
Than stands on any Shoulders now before me.

Reg. This is some Fellow, that having once been prais'd
For Bluntness, since affects a sawcy Rudeness;
But I have known one of these surly Knaves,
That in his Plainness harbour'd more Design
Than twenty cringing complementing Minions.

Duke. What's the Offence you gave him?

Gent. Never any, Sir,
It pleas'd the King his Master lately
To strike me on a slender misconstruction,
Whilst watching his advantage, this old Lurcher,
Tript me behind, for which the King extoll'd him;
And, flusht with the honour of this bold exploit,
Drew on me here agen.

Duke. Bring forth the Stocks, we'll teach you,

Kent. Sir, I'm too old to learn;
Call not the Stocks for me, I serve the King
On whose Employment I was sent to you,
You'll shew too small Respect, and too bold Malice
Against the Person of my Royal Master,
Stocking his Messenger.

Duke. Bring forth the Stocks, as I have life and Honour,
There shall he sit till Noon.

Reg. Till Noon, my Lord? till Night, and all Night too.

Kent. Why Madam, If I were your Father's Dog
You wou'd not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his Knave I will.

Gloster.

Gloſt. Let me beſeech your Graces to forbear him,
His fault is much, and the good King his Maſter
Will check him for't, but needs muſt take it ill
To be thus ſlighted in his Meſſenger.

Duke. We'll anſwer that;
Our Siſter may receive it worſe to have
Her Gentleman aſſaulted: to our buſineſs lead. [Exit.

Gloſt. I am ſorry for thee, Friend, 'tis the Duke's pleaſure,
Whoſe Diſpoſition will not be controll'd,
But I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray do not, Sir——
I have watch'd and travell'd hard,
Some time I ſhall ſleep out, the reſt I'll whistle:
Farewell t'ye Sir.

[Ex. *Gloſt.*

All weary and o'er watcht,
I feel the drowzy Gueſt ſteal on me; take
Advantage heavy Eyes on this kind Slumber,
Not to behold this vile and ſhameful Lodging.

[Sleeps.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. I heard my Self Proclaim'd,
And by the friendly Hollow of a Tree,
Eſcape the Hunt, no Port is free, no Place
Where Guards and moſt unuſual Vigilance
Do not attend to take me.—How eaſie now,
'Twere to defeat the malice of my Trale,
And leave the Griefs on my Sword's reeking Point;
But Love detains me from Death's peaceful Cell,
Still whiſpering me, *Cordelia's* in diſtreſs;
Unkind as ſhe is, I cannot ſee her wretched,
But muſt be near to wait upon her Fortune.
Who knows but the white Minute yet may come,
When *Edgar* may do ſervice to *Cordelia*,
That charming hope ſtill ties me to the Oar
Of painful Life, and makes me to ſubmit
To th' humbleſt ſhifts to keep that Life a Foot;
My face I will beſmear, and knit my Locks,
The Country gives me proof and preſident
Of *Bedlam* Beggars, who, with roaring Voices
Strike in there numm'd and mortifi'd bare Arms
Pins, Iron-ſpikes, Thorns, Sprigs of Roſemary;
And thus from Sheeps-coats, Fillages, and Mills,
Sometimes with Prayers, ſometimes with Lunatick Bans,
Enforce their Charity, poor *Tyrligod*, poor *Tom*,
That's ſomething yet, *Edgar* I am no more.

[Ex.
Kent

Kent in the Stocks still; Enter Lear attended.

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send back our Messenger.

Kent. Hail, noble Master.

Lear. How! Mak'st thou this Shame thy Pastime?
What's he that has so much mistook thy Place,
To set thee here?

Kent. It is both He and She, Sir, your Son and Daughter.

Lear. No. *Kent.* Yes. *Lear.* No, I say. *Kent.* I say yea.

Lear. By *Jupiter* I swear no.

Kent. By *Juno* I swear, I swear Ay.

Lear. They durst not do't;

They cou'd not, wou'd not do't; 'tis worse than Murther,

To do upon Respect such violent out-rage.

Resolve me with all modest haste, which way

Thou mayst deserve, or they impose this usage?

Kent. My Lord, when at there Home
I did commend your Highness Letters to them,
E'er I was ris'n arriv'd another Post,
Steer'd in his haste, breathless and panting forth
From *Goneril*, his Mistress, Salutations,
Whose Message being deliver'd, they took Horse,
Comanding me to follow, and attend
The leisure of there Answer; which I did;
But meeting that other Messenger,
Whose wellcome I perceiv'd had poison'd mine,
Being the very Fellow that of late
Had shewn such rudeness to your Highness, I
Having more Man than Wit about me, Drew,
On which he rais'd the House with Cowards cries:
This was the Trespass which your Son and Daughter
Thought worth the shame you see it suffer here.

Lear. Oh! how this Spleen swells upward to my Heart,
And heaves for passage.—Down, thou climbing rage;
Thy Element's below; where is this Daughter?

Kent. Within, Sir, at a Masque.

Enter Gloster.

Lear. Now *Gloster*? — ha!

Deny to speak with me; th'are sick, th'are weary,
They have travell'd hard to Night; — mere fetches;
Bring me a better Answer.

Glost. My dear Lord,
You know the fiery quality of the Duke. —

Lear. Vengeance, Death, Plague, Confusion;
Fiery! what Quality, — Why *Gloster, Gloster,*
I'd speak with the Duke of *Cornwal*, and his Wife.

Gloster. I have inform'd 'em so.

Lear. Inform'd 'em! dost thou understand me, Man,
I tell thee, *Gloster*, —

Gloster. Ay, my good Lord.

Lear. The King wou'd speak with *Cornwal*, the dear Father
Wou'd with his Daughter speak, commands her Service:
Are they inform'd of this? my Breath and Bloud!

Fiery! the fiery Duke! tell the hot Duke —

No, but not yet, may be he is not well,

Infirmity do's still neglect all Office;

I beg his Pardon, and I'll chide my Rashness

That took the indispos'd and sickly Fit

For the sound Man: — But wherefore sits he there?

Death on my State, this Act convinces me.

That this Retiredness of the Duke and her,

Is plain Contempt; give me my Servent forth;

Go tell the Duke and his Wife I'd speak with 'em

Now, instantly, bid 'em come forth and hear me;

Or at their Chamber door I'll beat the Drum,

Till it cry sleep to Death. —

Enter Cornwall and Regan.

Oh! Are ye come?

Duke. Health to the King.

Reg. I am glad to see your Highness.

Lear. *Regan.* I think you are, I know what cause
I have to think so; shoud'st thou not be glad

I wou'd divorce me from thy Mother's Tomb?

Beloved *Regan*, thou wilt shake to hear

What I shall utter: Thou could'st ne'r h' thought it;

Thy Sisters nought, O *Regan*, she has ty'd

Ingratitude like a keen Vulture here,

I scarce can speak to thee.

{ *Kent here set at*
{ *Liberty.*

Reg. I pray you, Sir, take patience; I have hope
That you know less to value her Desert,
Than she to slack her Duty.

Lear. Ha! How's that?

Reg. I cannot think my Sister in the least
Wou'd fail in her respects; but if perchance
She has restrain'd the Riots of your Followers,
'Tis on such Grounds, and to such wholesome Ends,
As clear her from all Blame.

Lear.

Lear. My Curses on her.

Reg. O Sir, you're old,
And shou'd content you to be rul'd and led,
By some discretion that discerns your State
Better than you self; therefore, Sir,
Return to our Sister, and say you have wrong'd her.

Lear. Ha! Ask her Forgiveness?
No, no, 'twas my mistake, thou didst not mean so?
Dear Daughter I confess that I am old;
Age is unnecessary, but thou art good,
And wilt dispence with my Infirmary.

Reg. Good Sir, no more of these unsightly passions;
Return back to our Sister.

Lear. Never, *Regan*,
She has abated me of half my Train,
Lock'd black upon me, stabb'd me with her Tongue;
All the stor'd Vengeances of Heav'n fall
On her Ingreatful Head; strike her young Bones
Ye taking Airs with Lameness.

Reg. O the blest Gods! Thus will you wish on me,
When the rash Mood —

Lear. No, *Regan*, Thou shalt never have my Curse,
Thy tender Nature cannot give thee o'er
To such Impiety; Thou better know'st
The Offices of Nature, Bond of Child-hood,
And Dues of Gratitude; thou bear'st in mind
The half o'th' Kingdom, which our love confer'd
On thee and thine.

Reg. Good Sir, to the purpose.

Lear. Who but my Man i'th' Stocks?

Duke. What Trumpet's that?

Reg. I know't, my Sisters, this confirms her Letters.
Sir, is your Lady come?

Enter Goneril's Gentleman.

Lear. More Torture still?
This is a Slave, whose easie borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle Grace of her he follows;
A fashion-fop, that spends the day in Dressing,
And all to bear his Lady's flatt'ring Message,
That can deliver with a Grace her Lye,
And with as bold a Face bring back a greater.
Out, Varlet, from my sight.

Duke. What means your Grace?

Lear.

Lear. Who stockt my Servant? *Regan,* I have hope
Thou didst not know it.

Enter Goneril.

Who comes here? Oh Heav'n's!
If you do love Old men; if you sweet Sir
Allow Obedience; if your selves are Old,
Make it your Cause, send down and take my part?
Why, *Gorgon*, dost thou come to Haunt me here?
Art not asham'd to look upon this Beard?

Darkness upon my Eyes, they play me false,
O *Regan*, Wilt thou take her by the Hand?

Gon. Why not by th' Hand, Sir? How have I offended?
All's not Offence that Indiscretion finds,
And Dotage terms so.

Lear. Heart, thou art too tough.

Reg. I pray you, Sir, being old, confess you are so,
If till the expiration of your Month,
You will return and sojourn with your Sister,
Dismissing half your Train, come then to me;
I am now from Home, and out of that Provision
That all be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return with her, and Fifty Knights dismiss,
No, rather I'll forswear all Roofs, and chuse
To be Companion to the Midnight Wolf.
My naked Head expos'd to th' merc'less Air,
Than have my smallest wants suppli'd by her.

Gon. At your choice, Sir.

Lear. Now I prethee Daughter do not make me mad;
I will not trouble thee, my Child, farewell.
We'll meet no more, no more see one another;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it,
I do not bid the Thunder-bearer strike,
Nor tell tales of thee to avenging Heav'n;
Mend when thou canst, be better at thy leisure,
I can be patient, I can stay with *Regan*,
I, and my hundred Knights.

Reg. Your Pardon, Sir,
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome.

Lear. Is this well spoken now?

Reg. My Sister treats you fair; what! fifty followers?
Is it not well? what shou'd you need of more?

Gon. Why might not you, my Lord, receive Attendance
From those whom she calls Servants, or from mine?

Reg. Why

Reg. Why not, my Lord? if then they chance to slack you,
We cou'd control 'em. — If you come to me,
For now I see the Danger, I entreat you
To bring but Five and Twenty; to no more
Will I give place.

Lear. Hold now, my temper, stand this bolt unmov'd,
And I am Thunder proof;
The wicked, when compar'd with the more wicked,
Seem beautiful, and not to be the worst,
Stands in some rank of Praise; now, *Goneril*,
Thou art innocent agen, I'll go with thee;
Thy Fifty yet, do's double Five and Twenty,
And thou art twice her Love.

Gon. Hear me, my Lord.
What need you Five and Twenty, Ten, or Five,
To follow in a House, where twice so many
Have a command t' attend you?

Reg. What need one?

Lear. Bloud! Fire! here—Leprosies and bluest Plagues!
Room, room for Hell to belch her Horrors up
And drench the *Circles* in a stream of Fire;
Heark how th' Infernals eccho to my rage
Their Whips and Snakes. — — —

Reg. How lewd a thing is Passion!

Gon. So old and stomachful.

[*Lightning and Thunder.*

Lear. Heav'ns drop your Patience down;
You see me here, ye Gods, a poor old Man,
As full of Griefs as Age, wretched in both —
I'll bear no more: No, you unnatural Hags,
I will have such Revenges on you both,
That all the Wold shall — I will do such things,
What they are yet I know not, but they shall be
The Terrors of the Earth; you think I'll weep,
This Heart shall break into a thousand pieces
Before I'll weep. — O Gods! I shall go mad.

[*Thunder again.*

[*Exit.*

Duke. 'Tis a wild Night, come out o' th' Storm.

[*Exeunt.*

End of the Second Act.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE, *A Desert Heath.**Enter Lear and Kent in the Storm.*

Lear. **B**LOW Winds, and burst your Cheeks, rage louder yet,
 Fantastick Lightning singe, singe my white Head;
 Spout Cataracts, and Hurricanoes fall,
 Till you have drown'd the Towns and Palaces
 Of proud ingrateful Man.

Kent. Not all my best intreaties can perswade him
 Into some needful shelter, or to bide
 This poor slight Cov'ring on his aged Head
 Expos'd to this wild War of Earth and Heav'n.

Lear. Rumble thy fill, fight Whirlwind, Rain, and Fire;
 Not Fire, Wind, Rain or Thunder are my Daughters:
 I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness;
 I never gave you Kingdoms, call'd you Children;
 You owe me no Obedience, then let fall
 Your horrible pleasure, here I stand your Slave,
 A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old Man;
 Yet will I call you servile Ministers,
 That have with two Pernicious Daughters join'd
 Their high engendred Battle against a Head
 So Old and White as mine, Oh! oh! 'tis Foul.

Kent. Hard by, Sir, is a Hovel, that will lend
 Some Shelter from this Tempest.

Lear. I will forget my Nature, what! so kind a Father?
 Ay, there's the Point.

Kent. Consider, good my Liege, Things that love Night
 Love not such Nights as this; these wrathful Skies
 Frighten the very wanderers o' th' Dark,
 And make 'em keep their Caves; such drenching Rain,
 Such Sheets of Fire, such Claps of horrid Thunder,
 Such Groans of roaring Winds have ne'er been known.

Lear. Let the Great Gods,
 That keep the dreadful pudder o'er our Heads,
 Find out their Enemies now. Tremble thou Wretch,
 That haste within thee undiscover'd Crimes?
 Hide, that Bloody hand, ———
 Thou perjur'd Villain, holy Hypocrite,
 That drink'st the Widows Tears, sigh now, and cry
 These dreadful Summoners Grace, I am a Man
 More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Good Sir, to th' Hovel.

Lear.

Lear. My Wit begins to burn,
 Come on my Boy, how dost my Boy? art Cold?
 I'm cold my self; shew this Straw, my Fellow,
 The Art of our Necessity is strange,
 And can make vile things precious; my poor Knave,
 Cold as I am at Heart, I've one place There [Lond. Storm.
 That's sorry yet for Thee. [Exit,

Gloster's Palace. Enter Bastard.

Bast. The Storm is in our louder Rev'lings drown'd,
 Thus wou'd I Reign, cou'd I but mount a Throne.
 The Riots of these prou'd imperial Sisters
 Already have impos'd the galling Yoke
 Of Taxes, and hard Impositions on
 The drudging Pefants Neck, who bellow out
 Their loud complaints in vain.—Triumphant Queens!
 With what Assurance do they treat the Crowd.
 O for a Taste of such Majestick Beauty,
 Which none but my hot veins are fit t' engage;
 Nor are my wishes desprate, for even now,
 During the Banquet, I observ'd their Glances
 Shot thick at me, and as they left the Room
 Each cast by stealth a kind inviting Smile,
 The happy Earnest——ha!

*Two Servants from several Entrances deliver him
 each a Letter. and Ex.*

Where merit is so Transparent, not to behold it [Reads.
 Were Blindness, and not to reward it Ingratitude.
Goneril.

Enough! Blind, and Ingreatful should I be
 Not to Obey the Summons of this Oracle.
 Now for a Second Letter. [Opens the other.
 If Modesty be not your Enemy, doubt not to [Reads.
 Find me your Friend.

Regan.

Excellent *Sybil*! O my glowing Bloud!
 I am already sick of expectation,
 And pant for the Possession.——Here *Gloster* comes
 With bus'ness on his Brow; be hush, my Joys.

Gloster. I come to seek thee, *Edmund*, to impart a business of Im-
 portance; I knew thy loyal Heart is taught to see the Cruelty of
 these ingreatful Daughters against our royal Master.

Bast. Most savage and unnatural.

Gloſt. This change in the State ſits uneaſie. The Commons re-
pine aloud at their female Tyrants, already they cry out for the
re-inſtalement of their good old King, whoſe Injuries I fear will
inflame 'em into Mutiny.

Baſt. 'Tis to be hop'd, not fear'd.

Gloſt. Thou haſt it Boy, 'tis to be hop'd indeed:

On me they caſt their Eyes, and hourly court me
To lead 'em on; and whiſt this Head is mine
I'm Theirs. A little covert Craft, my Boy,
And then for open Action; 'twill be Employment
Worthy ſuch honeſt daring Souls as Thine.

Thou, *Edmund*, art my truſty Emiſſary,
Haſte on the Spur at the firſt break of day
With theſe Diſpatches to the Duke of *Combray*;
You know what mortal Feuds have always ſlan'd
Between this Duke of *Cornwal*'s Family, and his;
Full Twenty thouſand Mountaineers
Th' inveterate Prince will ſend to our Aſſiſtance.
Diſpatch; Commend us to his Grace, and proſper.

{ Gives him
Letters.

Baſt. Yes, credulous old Man,
I will commend you to his Grace,
His Grace the Duke of *Cornwal* — — — — — inſtantly
To ſhew him theſe Contents in thy own Character,
And Seal'd with thy own Signet; then forthwith
The Chol'rick Duke gives Sentence on thy Life;
And to my Hand thy vaſt Revenues,
To glut my Pleaſure that till now has ſtarv'd.

*Gloſter going off is met by Cordelia entering, Baſtard
obſerving at a Diſtance.*

Cor. Turn, *Gloſter*, Turn, by the ſacred Pow'rs
I do conjure you, give my Griefs a Hearing,
You muſt; you ſhall, nay I am ſure you will,
For you were always ſtyl'd the Juſt and Good.

Gloſt. What wou'dſt thou, Princeſs? riſe, and ſpeak thy Griefs.

Cord. Nay, you ſhall promiſe to redreſs 'em too,
Or here I'll kneel for ever; I entreat
Thy ſuccour for a Father, and a King,
An injur'd Father, and an injur'd King.

Baſt. O Charming Sorrow! how her Tears adorn her,
Like Dew on Flow'rs, but ſhe is vertuous,
And I muſt quench this hopeleſs Fire i' th' Kindling.

Gloſt. Conſider, Princeſs,
For whom thou begg'ſt, 'tis for the King that wrong'd Thee.

Cord. O name not that; he did not, cou'd not wrong me.
Nay, muſe not, *Gloſter*, for it is too likely

This

This injur'd King e'er this, is past your Aid,
And gone Distracted with his Savage Wrongs.

Bast. I'll gaze no more,—and yet my Eyes are charm'd.

Cord. Or, what if it be Worse?

As 'tis too probable, this furious Night
Has pierc'd his tender Body, the bleak Winds
And cold Rain chill'd, or Lightning struck him Dead;
If it be so, your promise is discharg'd,
And I have only one poor Boon to beg,
That you'd convey me to his breathless Trunk,
With my torn Robes to wrap his hoary Head,
With my torn Hair to bind his Hands and Feet,
Then with a show'r of Tears
To wash his Clay-smear'd Cheeks, and dye beside him.

Glost. Rise, fair *Cordelia*, thou hast Piety
Enough t' atone for both thy Sisters Crimes.
I have already plotted to restore
My injur'd Master, and thy Vertue tells me
We shall succeed, and suddenly.

[*Ex.*

Cord. Dispatch, *Arante*,
Provide me a Disguise, we'll instantly
Go seek the King, and bring him some relief.

Ar. How, Madam! Are you ignorant
Of what your impious Sisters have decreed?
Immediate Death for any that relieve him.

Cord. I cannot dread the Furies in this case.

Ar. In such a Night as this? Consider, Madam,
For many miles about there's scarce a Bush
To shelter in.

Cord. Therefore no shelter for the King,
And more our Charity to find him out:
What have not Women dar'd for vicious Love?
And we'll be shining proofs that they can dare
For Piety as much. Blow Winds, and Lightnings fall,
Bold in my Virgin Innocence, I'll flie
My Royal Father to relieve, or dye.

[*Exit.*

Bast. Provide me a disguise, we'll instantly
Go seek the King: —ha! ha! a lucky change,
That Vertue which I fear'd would be my hindrance,
Has prov'd the Bond to my Design;
I'll bribe two Ruffians shall at distance follow,
And seise 'em in some desert Place; and there
Whilst one retains her t' other shall return
T' inform me where she's Lodg'd; I'll be disguis'd too.
Whilst they are poching for me, I'll to the Duke
With these Dispatches, then to th' Field
Where like the vig'rous *Jove* I will enjoy

This Semele in a Storm, 'twill deaf her Cries
 Like Drums in Battle, lest her Groans should pierce
 My pittyng Ear, and make the amorous Fight less fierce. [Exit.

Storm still. The Field Scene. Enter Lear and Kent.

Kent. Here is the place my Lord; good my Lord enter,
 The Tyranny of this open Night's to rough
 For Nature to endure.

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my Lord; enter.

Lear. Wilt break my Heart?

Kent. Befeech you, Sir.

Lear. Thou thin'kst 'tis much that this contentious Storm
 Invades us to the Skin; so 'tis to thee;
 But where the greater Malady is fixt,
 The lesser is scarce felt: the Tempest in my Mind
 Does from my Senses take all feeling else.
 Save what beats there. Filial Ingratitude!
 Is it not as this Mouth shoud tear this Hand
 For litting Food to't? — But I'll punish; home.
 No, I will no more; in such a Night
 To shut me out. — Pour on, I will endure
 In such a Night as this: O *Regan, Goneril!*
 Your old kind Father, whose frank Heart gave all;
 O that way madness lies; let me shun that;
 No more of that.

Kent. See, my Lord, here's the Entrance.

Lear. Well, I'll go in
 And pass it all, I'll pray, and then I'll sleep:
 Poor naked Wretches, wherefoe'er you are,
 That 'bide the pelting of this pittance Storm.
 How shall your houseless Heads and unfed Sides
 Sustain this Shock? your raggedness defend you
 From Seasons such as these.
 O! I have ta'en too little Care of this,
 Take Physick, Pomp,
 Expose thy self to feel what wretches feel,
 That thou mast cast the superflux to them,
 And shew the Heav'ns more just.

Edgar in the Hovel.

Five Fathom and a half, poor *Tom*.

Kent. What art thou that Dost grumble there i' th' Sraw?
 Come forth.

Edg.

Edg. Away! The foul Fiend follows me. — Through the sharp Haw-thorn blows the cold Wind. — Mum, go to the Bed and warm Thee. — Ha! What do I see? By all my Griefs the poor old King beheaded,

And drencht in this fow Storm, professing Syren,
Are all your Protestations come to this?

Lear. Tell me, Fellow, Did'st thou give all to thy Daughters?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor *Tom*, whom the Foul Fiend has led thro' Fire, and thro' Flame, thro' Bushes, and Bogs; that has laid Knives under his Pillow, and Halters, in his Pue; that has made him proud of Heart to ride on a Bay-trotting Horse over four inch'd Bridges, to course his own Shadow for a Traitour. — Bless thy five Wits. *Tom's* a cold. [*Shivers.*] Bless thee from Whirlwinds, Star-blasting, and taking: Do poor *Tom* some Charity, whom the foul Fiend vexes. — Sa, sa; there I could have him now, and there, and there agen.

Lear. Have his Daughters brought him to this pass?
Cou'dst thou save nothing? Didst thou give them all?

Kent. He has no Daughters, Sir.

Lear. Death, Traitor, nothing cou'd have subdu'd Nature
To such a Lowness, but his unkind Daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat upon Pillicock Hill; Hallo, hallo, hallo.

Lear. Is it the fashion that disgarded Fathers
Should have such little mercy on their Flesh?
Judicious punishment, 'twas his Flesh Begot
Those Pelicane Daughters.

Edg. Take heed of the fow Fiend; obey thy Parents; keep thy Word justly; swear not; commit not with Man's sworn Spouse; set not thy sweet Heart on proud Array: *Tom's* a Cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A Serving Man proud of Heart, that curl'd my Hair, us'd Perfume and Washes; that serv'd the Lust of my Mistress's Heart, and did the Act of Darknes with her; swore as many Oath's, as I spoke Words; and broke 'em all in the sweet Face of Heaven: Let not the Paint, nor the Patch, nor the rushing of Silks betray thy poor Heart to Woman; keep thy Foot out of Brothels, thy Hand out of Plackets, thy Pen from Creditors Books, and desie the foul Fiend. — Still through the Hawthorn blows the cold Wind. — Sese, Suum, Mun, Nonny, Dolphin, my Boy! — Hift, the Boy the Boy! Sefey! soft, let him Trot by.

Lear. Death! thou wert better in thy Grave, then thus to answer with thy uncover'd Body, this Extremitie of the Sky. And yet consider him well, and Man's no more than This; Thou art indebted to the Worm for no Silk, to the Beast for no Hide, to the Cat for no Perfume. — Ha! here's two of us are sophisticated; Thou

art

art the Thing it self, unaccomodated Man is no more than such a poor bare fork't Animal as thou art.

Off, Off, ye vain Disguises, empty Lendings,
I'll be my Original self, quick, quick, uncase me.

Kent. Defend his Wits, good Heaven!

Lear. One point I had forgot; what's your Name?

Edg. Poor *Tom*, that eats the swimming Frog, the Wall-nut and the Water-nut; that in the fury of his Heart, when the foul Fiend rages, eats Cow-dung for Sallets, swallows the old Rat, and the Ditch-dog, that drinks the green Mantle of the standing Pool, that's whipt from Tithing to Tithing, that has three Suits to his Back, six Shirts to his Body.

Horse to Ride, and Weapon to wear,
But Rats and Mice, and such small Deer,
Have been *Tom's* Food for seven long Year.

eware, my Follower; Peace, Smulk'n; Peace, thou foul Fiend.

Lear. One word more, but be sure true Counsellor; tell me, Is a Madman a Gentleman, or a Yeoman?

Kent. I fear'd 't would come to this; his Wits are gone.

Edg. *Fraterrito* calls me, and tells me, *Nero*, is an Angler in the Lake of Dakrness. Pray, *Innocent*, and beware the foul Fiend.

Lear. Right, ha! ha! was it not pleasant to have a Thousand with red hot Spits come hissing in upon 'em.

Edg. My Tears begin to take his part so much
They mar my Counterfeiting.

[*Aside.*

Lear. The little Dogs and all, Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see they Bark at me.

Edg. *Tom* will throw his Head at e'm; Avant, ye Curs.

Be thy Mouth, or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite,
Mastiff, Grey-hound, Mungrel, Grim,
Hound, or Spanial, Brack. or Hym,
Bob-tail, Hight, or Trundle-tail,
Tom will make 'em weep and wail,
For with throwing thus my Head,
Dogs leap the Hatch, and all are fled.

Ud, de, de, de, See, see, see. Come, march to Wakes, and Fairs, and Market-towns.—Poor *Tom*, thy horn is dry.

Lear. You, Sir, I entertain you for one of my Hundred, only I do not like the fashion of your Garments; you'll say they're Persian, but no matter, let 'em be chang'd.

Enter Gloster.

Edg. This is the Foul *Flibertigibet*; he begins at Curfew, and waks at first Cock; he gives the Web, and the Pin; knits the Ellock,

lock; squints the Eye, and makes the Hair-lip; mildews the white Wheat, and hurts the poor Creature of the Earth;

Swithin footed Thrice the Cold,

He met the Night-mare and her Nine-fold,

'Twas there he did apoint her;

He bid her alight, and her Troth plight,

And arroynt the Witch, arroynt her.

Gloſt. What, has your Grace no better Company?

Edg. The Prince of Darkneſs is a Gentleman; *Modo* he is call'd, and *Mabu*.

Gloſt. Go with me, Sir, hard by I have a Tenent.

My Duty cannot ſuffer me to obey in all your Daughters hard Commands, who have enjoyn'd me to make ſaſt my Doors, and let this Tyrannous Night take hold upon you. Yet have I ventur'd to come to ſeek you out, and bring you where both Fire and Food is ready.

Kent. Good my Lord, take his offer.

Lear. Firſt let me talk with this Philoſopher,
Say, *Staggerie*, what is the cauſe of Thunder.

Gloſt. Beſeech you, Sir, go with me.

Lear. I'll take a Word with this ſame Learned *Thebane*.

What is your Study?

Edg. How to prevent the Fiend, and to kill Vermin.

Lear. Let me aſk you a Word in private.

Kent. His Wits are quite unſettled; Good Sir, let's force him hence.

Gloſt. Canſt blame him? His Daughters ſeeks his Death; This Bedlam but diſturbs him the more. Fellow, be gone.

Edg. Child *Korland* to the dark Tow'r came,
His Word, was ſtill, Fi, Fo, and Fum,
I ſmell the Blood of a Britiſh Man.— Oh! Torture! [*Ex't.*

Gloſt. Now, I prethee Friend, let's take him in our Arms, and carry him where he ſhall meet both Welcome, and Protection.
Good Sir, along with us.

Lear. You ſay right; let 'em anatomize *Regan*, for what breeds about her Heart; is there any Cauſe in Nature for theſe hard Hearts?

Kent. Beſeech your Grace.

Lear. Hiſt! — make no Noiſe, make no Noiſe — ſo ſo; we'll to Supper i' th' Morning. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Cordelia and Arante.

Ar. Dear Madam, reſt ye here, our ſearch is vain,
Look, here's a ſhed; beſeech ye, enter here.

Cord. Prethee go thy ſelf, ſeek thy own Eaſe,
Where the Mind's free, the Body's delicate:
This Tempeſt but diverts me from the thought
Of what wou'd hurt me more.

Enter

Enter two Ruffians.

1. Ruff. We have dogg'd 'em far enough, this Place is private,
I'll keep 'em prisoners here within this Hovel,
Whilst you return and bring Lord *Edmund* hither;
But help me first to House 'em.

2. Ruff. Nothing but this, dear Devil, *[Shows Gold.]*
Shou'd have drawn me through all this Tempest;
But to our Work.

[They seize Cordelia and Arante, who shriek out.]
Soft, Madam, we are Friends; dispatch, I say.

Cord. Help, Murder, help; Gods! some kind Thunderbolt
To strike me dead.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. What Cry was that?—Ha, Women seisd by Ruffians?
Is this a Place and Time for Villany?

Avaunt, ye Bloud-hounds. *[Drives 'em with his Quarter Staff.]*

Both. The Devil, the Devil! *[Run off.]*

Edg. O speak, what are ye that appear to be
O'th' tender Sex, and yet ungarded wander
Through the dread Mazes of this dreadful Night,
Where (tho' at full) the clouded Moon scarce darts
Imperfect Glimmerings?

Cord. First say, what art thou?
Our Guardian Angel, that wer't pleas'd t' assume
That horrid shape to fright the Ravishers?
We'll kneel to Thee.

Edg. O my tumultuous Bloud!
By all my trembling Veins, *Cordelia's* Voice!
'Tis she her self! — My senses sure conform
To my wild Garb, and I am mad indeed. *[Aside.]*

Cord. What e'er thou art, befriend a wretched Virgin,
And if thou canst, direct our weary search.

Edg. Who relieves poor *Tom*, that sleeps on the Nettle, with
the fledg-pig for his Pillow.

Whilst smug ply'd the Bellows
She truckt with her Fellows,
The Freckle-fac'd Mab
Was a Blouze, and a Drab,
Yet *Smithin* made *Oberon* jealous — Oh! Torture.
Ar. Alack! Madam a poor wandring Lunatick.

Cord.

Cord. And yet his Language seem'd but now well temper'd.
 Speak, Friend, to one more wretched than my self,
 And if thou haste one Interval of sense,
 Inform us, if thou canst, where we may find
 A poor old Man, who through this Heath has stray'd
 The tedious Night.—Speak, sawest thou such a One?

Edg. The King, her Father, whom she's come to seek; [*Aside,*
 Through all the Terrors of this Night. O Gods!
 That such amazing Piety, such Tenderness
 Shou'd yet to me be Cruel.
 Yes, fair One, such a One was lately here,
 And is convey'd by some that came to seek him,
 To a neighb'ring Cottage; but distinctly where,
 I know not.

Cord. Blessings on 'em,
 Lets find him out, *Arante*, for thou seest
 We are in Heavens Protection.

[*Going off.*

Edg. O *Cordelia*!

Cord. Ha! — Thou know'st my Name.

Edg. As you did once know *Edgar's*.

Cord. *Edgar*!

Edg. The poor Remains of *Edgar*, what your Scorn
 Has left him.

Cord. Do we wake, *Arante*?

Edg. My Father seeks my Life, which I preserv'd
 In hopes of some blest Minute to oblige
 Distrest *Cordelia*, and the Gods have giv'n it;
 That Thought alone prevail'd with me to take
 This Frantick Dress, to make the Earth my Bed,
 With these bare Limbs all change of Seasons bide,
 Noons scorching Heat, and Midnights piercing Cold,
 To feed on Offals, and to drink with Herds,
 To combat with the Winds, and be the Sport
 Of Clowns, or what's more wretched yet, their Pity.

Ar. Was ever Tale so full of Misery!

Edg. But such a Fall as this I grant was due
 To my aspiring Love, for 'twas presumptuous,
 Though not presumptuously pursu'd;
 For well you know I wore my Flames conceal'd,
 And silent as the Lamps that burn in Tombs,
 'Till you perceiv'd my Grief, with modest Grace
 Drew forth the Secret, and then seal'd my Pardon.

Cord. You had your Pardon, nor can you challenge more.

Edg. What do I Challenge more?

Such Vanity agrees not with these Rags;
 When in my prosp'rous State, rich *Gloster's* Heir,

You silenc'd my Pretences, and enjoyn'd me
To trouble you upon that Theme no more;
Then what Reception must Loves Language find
From these bare Limbs and Beggars humble Weeds?

Cord. Such as the Voice of Pardon to a Wretch condemn'd,
Such as the Shouts

Of succ'ring Forces to a Town besieg'd.

Edg. Ah! What knew Method now of Cruelty!

Cord. Come to my Arms, thou dearest, best of Men,
And take the kindest Vows that e'er were spoke
By a protesting Maid.

Edg. Is't possible?

Cord. By the dear Vital Stream that baths my Heart,
These hallowed Rags of Thine, and naked Vertue,
These abject Taffels, these fantastick Shreds,
(Ridiculous ev'n to the meanest Clown)
To me are dearer than the richest Pomp
Of purple Monarchs.

Edg. Generous charming Maid,
The Gods alone that made, can rate thy Worth!
This most amazing Excellence shall be
Fame's Triumph in succeeding Ages, when
Thy bright Example shall adorn the Scene,
And teach the World Perfection.

Cord. Cold and Weary,
We'll rest a while, *Arante*, on that Straw,
Then forward to find out the poor Old King.

Edg. Look, I have Flint and Steel, the Implements
Of wandring Lunatics; I'll strike a Light,
And make a Fire beneath this Shed, to dry
Thy Storm drencht Garments, e'er thou lie to rest thee;
Then Fierce and Wakeful as th' *Hesperian* Dragon,
I'll watch beside thee to protect thy Sleep;
Mean while the Stars shall dart their kindest Beams,
And Angels visit my *Cordelia's* Dreams.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

SCENE, *The Palace.*

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Bastard, Servants. Cornwall with Gloster's Letters.

Duke. I will have my Revenge e'er I depart his House.

Regan, see here. a Plot upon our State,
'Tis *Gloster's* Character, that has betray'd
His double Trust of Subject, and of Host.

Reg. Then double be our Vengeance, this confirms
Th' Intelligence that we now receiv'd,
That he has been this Night to seek the King;
But who, Sir, was the kind discoverer?

Duke. Our *Eagle*, quick to spy, and fierce to seize;
Our trusty *Edmund*.

Reg. 'Twas a noble Service;
O *Cornwall*, take him to thy deepest Trust,
And wear him as a Jewel at thy Heart.

Bast. Think, Sir, how hard a Fortune I sustain,
That makes me thus repent of serving you; [Weeps.
O that this Treason had not been, or I
Not the Discoverer.

Duke, Edmund, Thou shalt find
A father in our Love, and from this Minute
We call thee Earl of *Gloster*; but there yet
Remains another Justice to be done,
And that's to punish this discarded Traitor;
But lest thy tender Nature should relent
At his just Sufferings, nor brook the Sight,
We wish thee to withdraw.

Reg. The *Grotto*, Sir, within the lower Grove } To *Edmund*
Has Privacy to suit a Mourner's Thought. } *Aside.*

Bast. And there I may expect a Comforter,
Ha, Madam?

Reg. What may happen, Sir, I know not,
But 'twas a Friends Advice.

Duke. Bring in the Traitor!

Gloster brought in.

Bind fast his Arms.

Gloster. What mean your Graces?
You are my Guests, pray do me no foul Play.

Duke. Bind him, I say, hard, harder yet.

Reg. Now Traitor, thou shalt find

F 2

Duke.

Duke. Speak, Rebel, where hast thou sent the King?
Whom spight of our Decree thou saw'st last Night.

Gloſt. I'm ty'd to th' Stake, and muſt ſtand the Courſe.

Reg. Say where, and why thou haſt conceal'd him?

Gloſt. Becauſe I wou'd not ſee thy cruel Hands
Tear out his poor old Eyes, nor thy fierce Siſter
Carve his anointed Fleſh; but I ſhall ſee
The ſwift wing'd Vengeance overtake ſuch Children.

Duke. See't thou ſhalt never; Slaves perform your Work.
Out with thoſe treacherous Eyes; diſpatch, I ſay,
If thou ſeeſt Vengeance. —

Gloſt. He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me ſome help. — O cruel! oh! ye Gods.

[*They put out his Eyes.*]

Serv. Hold, hold, my Lord, I bar your Cruelty,
I cannot love your ſafety, and give way
To ſuch a barbarous Practice.

Duke. Ha! my Villain.

Serv. I have been your Servant from my Infancy,
But better Service have I never done you
Than with this Boldneſs. —

Duke. Take thy Death, Slave.

Serv. Nay, then Revenge whiſt yet my Blood is Warm.

[*Fight.*]

Reg. Help here. — Are you not hurt, my Lord?

Gloſt. Edmund, enkindle all the ſparks of Nature
To quit this horrid Act.

Reg. Out treacherous Villain,
Thou call'ſt on him that hates thee, it was He
That broacht thy Treason, ſhew'd us thy Diſpatches;
There, — read, and ſave the *Cambrian* Prince a Labour:
If thy Eyes fail thee, call for Spectacles.

Gloſt. O my Folly!

Then *Edgar*, was abus'd, kind Gods, forgive me that.

Reg. How is't, my Lord?

Duke. Turn out that Eye-leſs Villain, let him ſmell
His way to *Cambry*, throw this Slave upon a Dunghill:

Regan. I bleed a pace, give me your Arm.

Gloſt. All dark, and comfortleſs!

Where are thoſe various Objects that but now
Employ'd my buſie Eyes? where thoſe Eyes?
Dead are their piercing Rays that lately ſhot
O'er flowry Vales to diſtant Sunny Hills,
And drew with Joy the vaſt Horizon in.
Theſe growping Hands are now my only Guides,
And Feeling all my Sight.

O Miſe:

O Misery! what words can sound my Grief?
 Shut from the living whilst amongst the Living;
 Dark as the Grave amidst the bustling World.
 At once from Business, and from Pleasure barr'd:
 No more to view the Beauty of the Spring,
 Nor see the Face of Kindred, or of Friend;
 Yet still one way th' extreamest Fate affords,
 And ev'n the Blind can find the way to Death.
 Must I then tamely dye, and unreveng'd?
 So *Lear* may fall: No, with these bleeding Rings
 I will present me to the p'ying Crowd,
 And with the Rhetorick of these dropping Veins
 Enflame 'em to revenge their King and me;
 Then when the Glorious Mischief is on Wing,
 This Lumber from some Precipice I'll throw,
 And dash it on the ragged Flint below;
 Whence my freed Soul to her bright Sphere shall fly,
 Through boundless Orbs, eternal Regions spy,
 And like the Sun, be all one glorious Eye.

[Exit.]

End of the Third Act.

ACT IV.

*A Grotto.**Edmund and Regan amorously Seated, listening to Musick.*

Bast. WHY where those Beauties made another's Right,
 Which none can prize like Me? Charming Queen,
 Take my blooming Youth, for ever fold me
 In those soft Arms, Lull me in endless Sleep,
 That I may dream of Pleasures too transporting
 For Life to bear.

Reg. Live, live, my Glist'ring,
 And feel no Death but that of swooning joy?
 I yield the Bliss on no harder Terms
 Than that thou continue to be Happy.

Bast. This Jealousie is yet more kind, is't possible
 That I should wander from a Paradise
 To feed on sickly Weeds? such Sweets live here
 That Constancy will be no virtue in me:
 And yet must I forthwith go meet her Sister,
 To whom, I must protest as much, —

[Aside.]

suppose

Suppose it be the same; why, best of all,
And I have then my Lesson already conn'd.

Reg. Wear this Remembrance of me. — I dare now
[Gives him a Ring.]

Ablent my self no longer from the Duke,
Whose Wound grows dangerous, I hope Mortal.

Bast. And let this happy Image of your *Gloster*,
[Pulling out a Picture, drops a Note.]

Lodge in that Breast where all his Treasure lies. [Exit.]

Reg. To this brave youth a Woman's blooming Beauties
Are due; my Fool usurps my Bed — What's here?
Confusion on my Eyes.

[Reads.]
*Where Merit is Transparent, not to behold it were Blind-
ness; and not to reward it, Ingratitude.*

Goneril.

Vexatious Accident! yet Fortunate too,
My Jealousie's confirm'd, and I am taught
To cast for my Defence. — [Enter an Officer.]

Now, what mean those Shouts? and that thy hasty Entrance?

Off. A most surprizing and a sudden Change,
The Peasants are all up in Mutiny,
And only want a Chief to lead 'em on
To storm your Palace.

Reg. On what Provocation?

Off. At last day's publick Festival, to which
The Yeomen from all Quarters had repair'd,
Old *Gloster*, whom you late depriv'd of Sight,
(His Veins yet streaming fresh,) presents himself,
Proclaims your Cruelty, and their Oppression,
With the King's Injuries; which so enrag'd 'em,
That now that Mutiny which long had crept,
Takes Wing, and threatens your best Pow'rs.

Reg. White-liver'd Slave!

Our Forces rais'd, and led by Valiant *Edmund*,
Shall drive this Monster of Rebellion back
To her dark Cell; young *Gloster*'s Arm allays
The Storm, his Father's feeble Breath did raise. [Exit.]

The Field SCENE, Enter Edgar.

Edg. The lowest and most abject Thing of Fortune
Stands still in Hope, and is secure from Fear.
The lamentable Change is from the Best,
The worst returns to Better. — Who comes here?

Alonzo

Enter

Enter Gloster, led by an old Man.

My Father poorly led! depriv'd of Sight!
The precious Stones torn from their bleeding Rings!
Something I heard of this inhumane Deed,
But disbeliev'd it, as an Act too horrid
For the hot Hell of a curst Woman's fury;
When will the measure of my woes be full?

Gloster. Revenge, thou art on foot, Success attend Thee,
Well have I sold my Eyes, if the Event
Prove happy for the injur'd King.

Old M. O, my good Lord, I have been your Tenant, and your
Father's Tenant these Fourscore years.

Gloster. Away, get thee away, good Friend be gone,
Thy Comforts can do me no good at all,
Thee they may hurt.

Old M. You cannot see your way.

Gloster. I have no way, and therefore want no Eyes,
I stumbled when I saw: O dear Son *Edgar*,
The Food of thy abused Father's Wrath,
Might I but live to see thee in my Touch,
I'd say, I had Eyes agen.

Edg. Alas, he's sensible that I was wrong'd,
And shou'd I own my Self his tender Heart
Would break betwixt the extreams of Grief and Joy.

Old M. How now, who's There?

Edg. A Charity for poor *Tom*. Play fair, and desie the foul
Fiend.

O Gods! and must I still pursue this Trade,
Trifling beneath such loads of Misery? [*Aside.*

Old M. 'Tis poor mad *Tom*.

Gloster. In the late Storm, I such a Fellow saw,
Which made me think a Man a Worm,
Where is the Lunatick?

Old M. Here, my Lord.

Gloster. Get thee now away, if for my sake
Thou wilt o'er-take us hence a Mile or Two,
I' th' way tow'rd *Dover*, do't for ancient Love,
And bring some cov'ring for this naked Wretch
Whom I'll intreat to lead me.

Old M. Alack, my Lord, He's Mad.

Gloster. 'Tis the Time's Plague when Mad-men lead the Blind,
Do as I bid thee.

Old M. I'll bring him the best 'Parrel that I have,
Come on't what will.

Gloster. Sirrah, naked Fellow.

[*Exit.*

Edg.

Edg. Poor *Tom's* a cold; ——— I cannot fool it longer;
And yet I must. ——— Bless thy sweet Eyes, they Bleed;
Believe't poor *Tom* ev'n weeps his blind to see 'em.

Gloſt. Know'st thou the way to *Dover*?

Edg. Both Stile and Gate, Horse-way and Foot-path; poor *Tom* has been scar'd out of his good Wits; bless every true Man's Son from the foul Fiend.

Gloſt. Here, take this Purse; that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier, Heav'n deal so still.
Thus let the griping Usurers Hoard be scatter'd,
So distribution shall undo Excess,
And each Man have enough! Dost thou know *Dover*?

Edg. Ay, Master.

Gloſt. There's a Cliff, whose high and bending Head
Looks dreadfully down on the roaring Deep;
Bring me but to the very Brink of it,
And I'll repair the Poverty thou bear'st
With something Rich about me, from that Place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy Arm: poor *Tom* shall guide thee.

Gloſt. Soft, for I hear the Tread of Passengers.

Enter Kent and Cordelia.

Cord. Ah me! your Fear's too true, it was the King;
I spoke but now with some that met him
As mad as the vex'd Sea Singing aloud,
Crown'd with rank Femiter, and Furrow Weeds,
With Berries, Burdocks, Violets, Dazies, Poppies,
And all the idle Flowers that grow
In our sustaining Corn; conduct me to him,
And Heav'n so prosper thee.

Kent. I will, good Lady.
Ha, *Gloster* here! ——— Turn, poor dark Man, and hear
A Friend's Condolement, who at sight of thine
Forgets his own Distress, thy old true *Kent*.

Gloſt. How, *Kent*? From whence return'd?

Kent. I have not since my Banishment been absent,
But in Disguise follow'd th' abandon'd King:
'Twas me thou saw'st with him in the late Storm.

Gloſt. Let me embrace thee, had I Eyes, I now
Should weep for Joy; but let this trickling Blood
Suffice instead of Tears.

Cord. O Misery!
To whom shall I complain, or in what Language?
Forgive, O wretched Man, the Piety
That brought thee to this pass; 'twas I that caus'd it;

I cast

I cast me at thy feet and beg of thee
To crush these weeping Eyes to equal Darkness,
If that will give thee any Recompense.

Edg. Was every Season so distress'd as This?

[*Aside.*

Gloft. I think *Cordelia's* Voice! rise pious Princess,
And take a dark Man's Blessing.

Cord. O, my *Edgar*!

My Vertue's now grown Guilty, works the Bane
Of those that do befriend me, Heav'n forsakes me,
And when you look that Way, it is but Just
That you shou'd hate me too.

Edg. O wave this cutting Speech, and spare to wound
A Heart that's on the Rack.

Gloft. No longer cloud thee, *Kent* in that disguise,
There's business for thee, and of noblest weight;
Our injur'd Country is at length in Arms,
Urg'd by the King's inhumane Wrongs and Mine,
And only want a Chief to lead 'em on.
That task be thine.

Edg. Brave *Britains*, then there's Life in't yet.

[*Aside.*

Kent. Then have we one cast for our Fortune yet.

Come, Princess, I'll bestow you with the King,
Then on the Spur to head these Forces.

Farewell, good *Gloster*, to our conduct trust.

Gloft. And be your Cause as Prosp'rous as 'tis Just.

[*Exeunt.*

Goneril's Palace. Enter Goneril, Attendants.

Gon. It was great Ignorance, *Gloster's* Eyes being out,
To let him live, where he arrives he moves
All Hearts against us; *Edmund* I think is gone,
In pity to his Misery, to dispatch him.

Gent. No, Madam, he's return'd on speedy Summons
Back to your Sister.

Gon. Ha! I like not That,
Such speed must have the Wings of Love; where's *Albany*?

Gent. Madam, within, but never Man so chang'd;
I told him of the uproar of the Peasants,
He smil'd at it, when I inform'd him
Of *Gloster's* Treason. ———

Gon. Trouble him no farther,
It is his coward Spirit; back to our Sister,
Hasten her Musters, and let her know
I have giv'n the Distaff into my Husband's Hands.
That done, with special Care deliver these Dispatches
In private to young *Gloster*.

G

Enter

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. O Madam, most unseasonable News,
The Duke of Cornwall's dead of his late Wound,
Whose loss your Sister has in part supply'd,
Making brave *Edmund* General of her Forces.

Gon. One way I like this well;
But being Widow, and my *Gloster* with her,
May blast the promis'd Harvest of our Love.
A word more, Sir, — add Speed to your Journey,
And if you chance to meet with that blind Traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

[*Ex.*

The Field SCENE, *Gloster and Edgar.*

Gloft. When shall we come to th' Top of that same Hill?

Edg. We climb it now, mark how we labour.

Gloft. Methinks the ground is even.

Edg. Horrible Steep; heark, do you hear the Sea?

Gloft. No truly.

Edg. why then your other Senses grow imperfect
By your Eyes Anguish.

Gloft. So may it be indeed.
Methinks thy Voice is alter'd, and thou speak'st
In better Phrase and Matter than thou did'st.

Edg. You are much deceiv'd, in nothing am I alter'd
But in my Garments.

Gloft. Methinks y' are better spoken.

Edg. Come on, Sir, here's the Place, how fearful

And dizzy 'tis to cast one's Eyes so low.

The Crows and Choughs that Wing the mid-way Air

Shew scarce so big as Beetles, half way down

Hangs one that gathers Samphire, dreadful Trade!

The Fisher-men that walk upon the Beach

Appear like Mice, and yon tall anch'ring Baique

Seems lessen'd to her Cock; her Cock a Buoy

Almost too small for Sight: the murmuring Surge

Cannot be heard so high, I'll look no more

Lest my Brain turn, and the disorder make me

Tumble down head-long.

Gloft. Set me where you stand.

Edg. You are now within a Foot of th' extream Verge.
For all beneath the Moon I wou'd not now
Leap forward,

Gloft.

Gloſt. Let go my Hand,
Here, Friend, is another Purſe, in it a Jewel
Well worth a poor Man's taking; get thee farther;
Bid me Farewel, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Fare you well, Sir. — That I do trifle thus
With this his Deſpair, is with Deſign to cure it.

Gloſt. Thus, mighty Gods, this World I do renounce,
And in your Sight ſhake my Afflictions off;
If I cou'd bear 'em longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great oppoſeleſs Wills,
My Snuff and feebler part of Nature ſhou'd
Burn it ſelf out; if *Edgar* lived, O, Bleſs him.
Now, Fellow, fare thee well.

Edg. Gone, Sir, Farewell.
And yet I know not how Conceit may Rob
The Treafury of Life, had he been where he thought,
By this had Thought been paſt: — Alive, or Dead?
Ho, Sir, Friend; hear you, Sir, Speak. —
Thus might he paſs indeed, — yet he revives.
What are you, Sir?

Gloſt. Away, and let me dye.

Edg. Hadſt thou been ought but Goſmore Feathers, Air,
Falling ſo many Fathom down,
Thou hadſt ſhiver'd like an Egg; but thou doſt breath,
Haſt heavy Subſtance, bleed'ſt? Not Speak! Art ſound?
Thy Life's a Miracle.

Gloſt. But have I ſaln or no?

Edg. From the dread Summet of this chalky Bourn:
Look up, an Height, the Shrill-tun'd Lark ſo high
Cannot be ſeen, or heard; do but look up.

Gloſt. Alack, I have no Eyes.
Is wretchedneſs depriv'd that Benefit
To end it ſelf by Death?

Edg. Give me your Arm.
Up; ſo, how iſ't? Feel you your Legs? You ſtand.

Gloſt. Too well, too well.

Edg. Upon the Brow o' th' Cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you?

Gloſt. A poor unfortunate Beggar.

Edg. As I ſtood here below, me-thought his Eyes
Were two full Moons, wide Noſtrils breathing Fire.
It was ſome Fiend, therefore thou happy Father,
Think that th' all-powerful Gods, who make them Honours
Of Mens Impoſſibilitates, have preſerv'd thee.

Gloſt. 'Tis wonderful; henceforth I'll bear Affliction
'Till it expire; the Goblin which you ſpeak of,

I took for a Man: oft-times 'twould say,
The Fiend, the Fiend: He led me to that Place.

Edg. Bear free and patient Thoughts: but who comes here?

*Enter Lear, a Coronet of Flowers on his Head; Wreaths,
and Garlands about him.*

Lear. No, no; they cannot touch me for Coyning; I am the King himself.

Edg. O piercing Sight.

Lear. Nature's above Art in that Respect; There's your Press-money: That fellow handles his Bow like a Cow-keeper: — Draw me a Clothier's yard. A Mouse, a Mouse, peace, ho! There's my Gauntlet; I'll prove it on a Giant: Bring up the brown Bills: O well flown Bird; i'th' White, i'th' White. — Heugh! give the Word.

Edg. Sweet *Marjorum*.

Lear. Pass.

Gloſt. I know that Voice.

Lear. Ha! *Goneril* with a white Beard! they flatter'd me like a Dog, and told me I had white hairs on my Chin, before the Black ones were there; to say ay and no to every thing that I said: Ay and no too was no good Divinity. When the Rain came once to wet me, and the Winds to make me chatter; when the Thunder would not peace at my Bidding. There I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out; go too, they are not Men of their Words; they told me I was a King; 'tis a Lye, I am not Aque proof.

Gloſt. That Voice I well remember, it's not the King's?

Lear. Ay, every Inch a King, when I do Stare
See how the Subject quakes.

I pardon that Man's Life; what was the Cause?
Adultery? Thou shalt not dye. Dye for Adultery!
The Wren goes to't, and the small gilded Flie
Engenders in my Sigh't; Let Copulation thrive;
For *Gloster's* Bastard Son was kinder to his Father
Than were my Daughters got i'th' Lawful Bed.
To't Luxury, Pell-mell, for I lack Soldiers.

Gloſt. Not all my Sorrows past so deep have toucht me,
As the sad Accents: Sight were now a Torment. —

Lear. Behold that simp'ring Lady, she that starts
At Pleasures Name, and thinks her Ear profan'd
With the least wanton Word; wou'd you believe it,
The Fitcher, nor the pamper'd Steed goes to't
With such a riotous Appetite: Down from the Waste they are Cen-
taurs, though Women all above; but to the Girdle do the Gods in-
herit, beneath is all the Fiends; There's Hell, there's Darknes,
the

the Sulphurous unfathom'd——Fie! fie! pah!——an Ounce of Civet, good Apothecary, to sweeten my Imagination. — There's Money for thee.

Gloſt. Let me kiſs that Hand.

Lear. Let me wipe it firſt; it ſmells of Mortality.

Gloſt. Speak, Sir, Do you know me?

Lear. I remember thy Eyes well enough: Nay, do thy worſt, blind *Cupid*. I'll not love.—Read me this Challenge, mark but the penning of it.

Gloſt. Were all the Letters Suns, I cou'd not ſee.

Edg. I wou'd not take this from Report; wretched *Cordelia*! What will thy Vertue do when thou ſhalt find This freſh Affliction added to the Tale Of thy unparallel'd Griefs.

Lear Read.

Gloſt. What! with this caſe of Eyes?

Lear O ho! Are you there with me? No Eyes in your Head, and no Money in your Purſe? Yet you ſee how this world goes.

Gloſt. I ſee it feelingly.

Lear. What! Art Mad? A Man may ſee how this World goes with no Eyes. Look with thy Ears; ſee how yond Juſtice rails on that ſimple Thief; ſhake 'em together, and the firſt that drops, be it Thief or Juſtice, is a Villain.—Thou haſt ſeen a Farmer's Dog bark at a Beggar.

Gloſt. Ay, Sir.

Lear. And the Man ran from the Curr; there thou might'ſt behold the great Image of Authority; a Dog's obey'd in Office. Thou Rascal, Beadle, hold up thy Bloody Hand, VVhy doſt thou laſh that Strumpet? thou hotly luſt'ſt to enjoy her in that kind for which thou whip'ſt her; do, do, the Judge that ſentenc'd her has been before-hand with thee.

Gloſt. How ſtiff is my vile Senſe, that yields not yet?

Lear. I tell thee the Uſurer hangs the Couz'ner, through tatter'd Robes ſmall Vices do appear; Robes, and Furr-gowns hide All: Place Sins with Gold; why there 'tis for thee, my Friend, make much of it; it has the Pow'r to ſeal the Accuſer's Lips. Get thee glaſs Eyes, and like a ſcurvy Politician, ſeem to ſee the Things thou doſt not. Pull, pull off my Boots; hard, harder; ſo, ſo.

Gloſt. O Matter and Impertinency mixt? Reason in Madneſs.

Lear. If thou wilt weep my Fortunes, take my Eyes, I know thee well enough, thy Name is *Gloſter*. Thou muſt be patient, we come Crying hither. Thou know'ſt, the firſt time that we taſt the Air We Wail and Cry,——I'll preach to thee, Mark.

Edg. Break lab'ring Heart.

Lear.

Lear. When we are born we Cry that we are come
To this great Stage of Fools.——

Enter Two or Three Gentlemen.

Gent. O! here he is; lay hand upon him Sir:
Your dearest Daughter sends——

Lear. No Rescue? What! a Prisoner? I am even the natural
Fool of Fortune: Use me well, you shall have Ransom.—— Let me
have Surgeons? O! I am cut to th' Brains.

Gent. You shall have any Thing.

Lear. No Second's? All my Self? I will dye bravely like a smug
Bridegroom, flusht and pamper'd as a Priest's Whore: I am a
King, my Masters, know ye that?

Gent. You are a Royal one, and we obey you?

Lear. It were an excellent Stratagem to shoe a Troop of Horse
with Felt, I'll put in proof——on Noife, no Noife.—— Now will
we steal upon these Sons-in-Law, and then——Kill, kill, kill, kill!
[*Ex. Running.*]

Gloft. A Sight most moving in the meanest Wretch,
Past speaking in a King. Now, good Sir, what are you?

Edg. A most poor Man made tame to Fortune's strokes,
And prone to pity by experienc'd Sorrows; give me your Hand.

Gloft. You ever gentle Gods take my Breath from me,
And let not my ill Genius tempt me more
To dye before you please.

Enter Goneril's Gentleman-Usher.

Gent. A proclaim'd Prize, O most happily met,
That Eye-less Head of thine was first fram'd Flesh
To raise my Fortunes; Thou old unhappy Traitor,
The Sword is out that must destroy thee.

Gloft. Now let thy friendly Hand put strength enough to't.

Gent. Wherefore, bold Peasant,
Dar'st thou support a publish'd Traitor? Hence,
Lest I destroy Thee too. Let go his Arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, Zir, without 'vurther 'Casion.

Gent. Let go, Slave, or thou dyest.

Edg. Good Gentleman go your Gate, and let poor Volk pass;
and 'Chu'd ha' bin' Zwagger'd out of my Life, it wou'd not a bin
zo long as 'tis by a Vort-night.—— Nay, an' thou com'st near
th' old Man, I'll try whether your Costard or my Ballow be th'
harder.

Gent. Out Dunghill.

Edg. 'Chill pick your Teeth, Zir; Come, no matter
Voines.

Gent. Slave, thou hast Slain me; Oh untimely Death!

Edg.

Edg. I know thee well a serviceable Villain,
As duteous to the Vices of thy Mistress,
As Lust cou'd wish.

Gloſt. What ! is he Dead ?

Edg. Sit you, Sir, and rest you.

This is a Letter Carrier, and may have
Some Papers of Intelligence, that may stand
Our Party in good stead to know. — What's here ?

[*Takes a Letter out of his Pocket ; opens, and reads*
To Edmund Earl of Gloſter.

Let our Mutual Loves be remembred, you have many opportunities to cut him Off. If he return the Conqueror, then I am still a Prisoner, and his Bed my Goal ; from the loath'd Warmth of which deliver me, and supply the Place for your Labour.

Goneril.

A Plot upon her Husband's Life,
And the Exchange my Brother ! — Here i'th' Sands
I'll rake thee up, thou Messenger of Lust,
Griev'd only that thou hadst no other Deaths-man.
In time and Place convenient I'll produce
These Letters to the sight of th' injur'd Duke,
As best shall serve our Purpose ; Come, your Hand.
Far off methinks I hear the beaten Drum,
Come, Sir, I will bestow you with a Friend.

[*Exeunt.*
A Chamber. Lear a Sleep on a Couch ; Cordelia, and Attendants standing by him.

Cord. His Sleep is sound, and may have good Effect
To cure his jarring Senſes, and repair
This Breach of Nature.

Phys. We have employ'd the utmost Pow'r of Art,
And this deep Rest will perfect our Design.

Cord. O *Regan*, *Goneril* ! Inhumane Sisters,
Had he not been your Father, these white Hairs
Had challeng'd sure some pity ? Was this a Face
To be expos'd against the jarring Winds ?
My Enemy's Dog though he had bit me shou'd
Have stood that Night against my Fire — he wakes, speak to him.

Gent. Madam, do you. 'tis fittest.

Cord. How do's my Royal Lord ? How fares your Majesty ?

Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o'th' Grave.

Ha ! Is this too a World of Cruelty ?

I know my Privilege, think not that I will

Be us'd like a wretched Mortal ? no,

No more of That.

Cord. Speak to me, Sir, whom am I ?

Lear.

Lear. You are a Soul in Blifs, but I am bound
Upon a Wheel of Fire, which my own Tears
Do scald like Molten Lead.

Cord. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a Spirit, I know; where did you dye?

Cord. Still, still, far wide.

Phys. Madam he's scarce awake; he'll soon grow more compos'd.

Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair Day-Light!
I am mightily abus'd, I shou'd even dye with pity
To see another thus. I will not swear
These are my Hands.

Cord. O look upon me, Sir,
And hold your Hands in Blessing over me; nay,
You must not kneel.

Lear. Pray do not mock me.
I am a very foolish fond old Man,
Fourscour and upward; and to deal plainly with you,
I fear I am not in my perfect Mind.

Cord. Nay, then farewell to Patience: witness for me
Ye mighty Pow'rs, I ne'er complain'd till now!

Lear. Methinks I shou'd know you and know this Man,
Yet I am doubtful, for I am mainly ignorant
What Place this is, and all the skill I have
Remembers not these Garments; nor do I know
Where I did sleep last Night. — Pray do not mock me —
For, as I am a Man, I think that Lady
To be my Child *Cordelia*.

Cord. O my dear, dear Father!

Lear. Be your Tears wet? Yes faith; pray do not Weep,
I know I have giv'n thee Cause, and am so humbled
With Crosses since, that I cou'd ask
Forgiveness of thee, were it possible
That thou cou'dst grant it; but I'm well assur'd
Thou canst not; therefore I do stand thy Justice;
If thou hast Poison for me I will drink it,
Bless thee, and dye.

Cord. O pity, Sir, a bleeding Heart, and cease
This killing Language.

Lear. Tell me, Friends, where am I?

Gent. In your own Kingdom, Sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Gent. Be comforted; good Madam, for the Violence
Of his Distemper's past; we'll lead him in,
Nor trouble him, till he is better settled.
Wilt please you, Sir, walk into freer Air?

Lear. You must bear with me, I am Old and Foolish.

[*They lead him off.*]

Cord. The Gods restore you.—Heark, I hear afar

The beaten Drum, Old *Kent*'s a Man of's Word.

O for an Arm

Like the fierce Thunderer's, when the Earth-born Sons
Storm'd Heav'n to fight this injur'd Father's Battle!

That I cou'd shift my Sex, and die me deep

In his opposer's Blood! But as I may,

With Womens Weapons, Piety and Pray'rs,

I'll aid his Cause. — You never-erring Gods

Fight on his Side, and Thunder on his Foes

Such Tempests as his poor ag'd Head sustain'd;

Your Image suffers when a Monarch bleeds.

'Tis your own Cause, for that your Succors bring,

Revenge your selves, and right an injur'd King.

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT V.

SCENE, *A Camp.*

Enter Goneril and Attendants.

Gon. O UR Sister's Pow'rs already are arriv'd,
And she her self has promis'd to prevent
The Night with her Approach: Have you provided
The Banquet I bespoke for her Reception
At my Tent?

Att. So, please your Grace, we have.

Gon. But thou, my Poisoner, must prepare the Bowl
That Crowns this Banquet, when our Mirth is High,
The Trumpets sounding, and the Flutes replying,
Then is the Time to give this fatal Draught
To this imperious Sister; if then our Arms succeed,
Edmund, more dear than Victory, is mine.

But if Defeat or Death it self attend me,

'Twill charm my Ghost to think I've left behind me,

No happy Rival. Heark, she comes.

[*Trumpet.* [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Bastard in his Tent.

Bast. To both these Sisters have I sworn my Love,
Each jealous of the the other, as the Stung
Are of the Adder; neither can be held
If both remain alive; Where shall I fix?
Cornwall is Dead, and *Regan*'s empty Bed
Seems cast by Fortune for me, but already

I have enjoy'd her, and bright *Goneril*
 With equal Charms brings dear Variety,
 And yet untasted Beauty: I will use
 Her Husband's Countenance for the Battel, then
 Usurp at once his Bed and Throne. [Enter Officers.

My trusty Scouts y^e are well return'd; Have ye descry'd
 The strength and posture of the Enemy?

Off. We have, and were surpriz'd to find
 The banish'd *Kent* return'd, and at their Head;
 Your Brother *Edgar* on the Rear; old *Gloster*
 (A moving Spectacle) led through their Ranks,
 Whose pow'ful Tongue, and more prevailing Wrongs,
 Have so enrag'd their rustick Spirits, that with
 Th' approaching Dawn we must expect their Rattel.

East. You bring a welcome Hearing; Each to his Charge.
 Line well your Ranks, and stand on your Award,
 To Night repose you, and i^th' Morn we'll give
 The Sun a Sight that shall be worth his Rising. [Exeunt.

SCENE, A Valley near the Camp.

Enter Edgar and Gloster.

Edg. Here, Sir, take you the shadow of this Tree
 For your good Host; pray that the Right may thrive:
 If ever I return to you again
 I'll bring you Comfort. [Exit.

Gloster. Thanks, friendly Sir;
 The Fortune your good Cause deserves betide you.

An Alarm; after which Gloster speaks.

The Fight grows hot; the whole War's now at Work,
 And the gear'd Battel bleeds in every Vein.
 Whilst Drums and Trumpets drown loud Slaughter's Roar:
 Where's *Gloster* now that us'd to head the Fray,
 And scour the ranks where deadliest danger lay?
 Here like a Shepherd in a lonely Shade,
 Idle, unarm'd, and listening to the Fight;
 Yet the disabled Courser, Maim'd and Blind,
 When to the Stall he hears the ratling War,
 Foaming with Rage, tears up the batter'd Ground,
 And tugs for Liberty.

No more of Shelter, thou Blind Worm, but forth
 To th' open Field; the War may come this way
 And crush thee into Rest. — Here lie thee down,
 And tear the Earth, that work befits a Mole.
 O dark Despair! When, *Edgar*, wilt thou come
 To pardon, and dismiss me to the Grave? [A Retreat sounded.

Heark!

Heark! a Retreat, the King has lost or won.

Re-enter Edgar, bloody.

Edg. Away, old Man, give me your Hand, away!

King Lear has lost; He and his Daughter ta'en,

And this, ye Gods, is all that I can save

Of this most precious Wreck; give me your Hand.

Glost. No farther, Sir, a Man may rot even here.

Edg. What! In ill Thought's again? Men must endure
There going hence, ev'n as their coming hither.

Glost. And that's true too.

[Exeunt.]

Flurish. Enter in Conquest, Albany, Goneril, Regan, Bastard.

Lear, Kent, Cordelia, Prisoners.

Alb. It is enough to have Conquer'd, Cruelty
Shou'd ne'er survive the Fight, Captain o'th' Guards,
Treat well your Royal Prisoners till you have
Our farther Orders, as you hold our Pleasure.

Con. Heark! Sir, not as you hold our Husband's pleasure.

[To the Captain aside.]

But as you hold your Life, dispatch your Pris'ners.
Our Empire can have no sure Settlement
But in their Death, the Earth that covers them
Binds fast our Throne: Let me hear they are Dead.

Capt. I shall obey your Orders.

Bast. Sir, I approve it safest to pronounce
Sentence of Death upon this wretched King,
Whose Age has Charms in it, his Title more,
To draw the Commons once more to his Side,
'Twere best prevent. ———

Alb. Sir, by your Favour,
I hold you but a Subject of this War,
Not as a Brother.

Reg. That's as we list to Grace him.
Have you forgot that he did lead our Pow'rs,
Bore the Commission of our Place and Person?
And that Authority may well stand up,
And call it self your Brother.

Gon. Not so hot,
In his own Merits he exalts himself
More than in your Addition.

Enter Edgar disguised.

Alb. What art thou?

Edg. Pardon me, Sir, that I presume to stop
A Prince and Conqueror, yet e'er you Triumph,
Give Ear to what a Stranger can deliver
Of what concerns you more than Triumph can.
I do impeach your General there of Treason,

Lord *Edmund*, that usurps the Name of *Glister*,
 Of foulest Practice 'gainst you Life and Honour;
 This Charge is True, and wretched though I seem,
 I can produce a Champion that will prove
 In single Combat what I do avouch;
 It *Edmund* dares but trust his Cause and Sword.

Bast. What will not *Edmund* dare! my Lord, I beg
 The favour that you'd instantly appoint
 The Place where I may meet this Challenger,
 Whom I will sacrifice to my wrong'd Fame;
 Remember, Sir, that injur'd Honour's nice
 And cannot brook delay.

Alb. Anon, before our Tent, i'th' Army's view,
 There let the Herald cry.

Edg. I thank your Highness in my Champion's Name,
 He'll wait your Trumpet's call.

Alb. Lead.

[*Exeunt.*

Manent Lear, Kent, Cordelia, guarded.

Lear. O *Kent*, *Cordelia*!

You are the only Pair that I e'er wrong'd,
 And the just Gods have made you Witnesses
 Of my Disgrace, the very shame of Fortune,
 To see me chain'd and shackled at these years!
 Yet were you but Spectators of my Woes,
 Not fellow-sufferers, all were well!

Cord. This language, Sir, adds yet to our Affliction.

Lear. Thou, *Kent*, didst head the Troops that fought my Battel,
 Expos'd thy Life and Fortunes for a Master
 That had (as I remember) banisht Thee.

Kent. Pardon me, Sir, that once I broke your Orders,
 Banisht by you, I kept me here disguis'd
 To watch your Fortunes, and protect your Person;
 You know you entertain'd a rough blunt Fellow,
 One *Cajus*, and you thought he did you Service.

Lear. My trusty *Cajus*, I have lost him too!
 'Twas a rough Honesty.

[*Weeps.*

Kent. I was that *Cajus*.
 Disguis'd in that course Dress, to follow you.

Lear. My *Cajus* too! wer't thou my trusty *Cajus*?
 Enough, enough. —

Cord. Ah me, he faints! his Blood forsakes his Cheek,
 Help. *Kent.* —

Lear. No, no, they shall not see us weep,
 We'll see them rot first.—Guards, lead away to Prison;
 Come *Kent*, *Cordelia*, come;

We

We two will sit alone, like Birds i'th' Cage,
When thou dost ask me Blessing, I'll kneel down
And ask of Thee Forgiveness; Thus we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old Tales, and laugh
At gilded Butter-flies, hear Sycophants
Talk of Court News, and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses, and who wins, who's in, who's out,
And take upon us the Mystery of Things
As if we were Heav'n's Spies.

Cord. Upon such Sacrifices
The Gods themselves throw Incense.

Lear. Have I caught ye?
He that parts us must bring a Brand from Heav'n:
Together we'll out-toil the spight of Hell,
And dye the Wonders of the World; Away.

[*Exeunt, guarded.*]

*Flourish. Enter before the Tents, Albany, Goneril, Regan, Guards
and Attendants; Goneril speaking a part to the Captain of the
Guards entering.*

Gon. Here's Gold for Thee, Thou know'st our late Command
Upon your Pris'ners Lives; about it streight, and at
Our Ev'ning Banquet let it raise our Mirth,
To hear that they are Dead.

Capt. I shall not fail your Orders.

[*Ex.*]

Albany, Gon. Reg. take their Seats.

Alb. Now, *Gloster*, trust to thy single Vertue, for thy Soldiers
All levied in my Name, have in my Name
Took their Discharge; now let our Trumpets speak,
And Herald read out this.

[*Herald Reads.*]

*If any Man of Quality, within the Lists of the Army, will maintain
upon Edmund, suppos'd Earl of Gloster, that he is a manifold Trai-
tour, let him appear by the third sound of the Trumpet; He is bold
in his defence.——Agen, Agen.*

[*Trumpets answers from within.*]

Enter Edgar arm'd.

Alb. Lord Edgar!

Bis. Ha! my Brother!

This is the only Combatant that I cou'd fear;
For in my Breast Guilt Duels on his side,
But, Conscience, what have I to do with Thee?

Awe

Awe Thou thy dull legitimate Slaves, but I
Was a born Libertine, and so I keep me.

Edg. My noble Prince, a word; — e'er we engage
Into your Highness's Hands I give this Paper,
It will the truth of my Impeachment prove;
Whatever be my fortune in the Fight.

Alb. We shall pursue it.

Edg. Now, *Edmund*, draw thy Sword,
That if my speech has wrong'd a Noble Heart,
Thy Arm may do thee Justice: Here I'th' presence
Of this high Prince, these Queens, and this crown'd List,
I brand thee with the spotted Name of Traitor,
False to thy Gods, thy Father, and thy Brother,
And what is more, thy Friend; false to this Prince:
If then thou shar'st a spark of *Gloster's* Vertue,
Acquit thy self; or if thou shar'st his Courage,
Meet this defiance bravely.

Bast. And dares *Edgar*,
The beaten routed *Edgar*, brave his Conquerour?
From all thy Troops and Thee I forc'd the Field,
Thou hast lost the gen'ral Stake, and art Thou now
Come with thy petty single Stock to play
This after-game?

Edg. Half-blooded Man,
Thy Father's Sin first, then his Punishment;
The dark and vicious Place where he begot thee
Cost him his Eyes; from thy licentious Mother
Thou draw'st thy Villany; but for thy part
Of *Gloster's* Blood, I hold thee worth my Sword.

Bast. Thou bear'st Thee on thy Mother's Piety,
Which I despise; thy Mother being chaste
Thou art assur'd Thou art but *Gloster's* Son;
But mine, disdaining Constancy, leaves me
To hope that I am sprung from nobler Blood,
And possible a King might be my Sire:
But be my Birth's uncertain Chance as 'twill,
Who 'twas that had the hit to Father me
I know not; 'tis enough that I am I:
Of this one thing I'm certain, — that I have
A daring Soul, and so have at thy Heart.
Sound Trumpet.

[*Fight, Bastard falls.*]

Cor. And *Reg.* Save him, save him.

Gen. This was Practice, *Gloster*,
Thou won'st the Field, and wast not bound to Fight
A vanquish't Enemy. Thou art not Conquer'd,
But couz'n'd and betray'd.

Alb.

Alb. Shut your Mouth, Lady,
Or with this Paper I shall stop it.——Hold, Sir,
Thou worse than any Name, read thy own evil:
No Tearing, Lady, I perceive you know it.

Gen. Say, if I do, who shall arraign me for't?
The Laws are Mine, not Thine.

Alb. Most monstrous! Ha! Thou know'st it too?

Bast. Ask me not what I know,
I have not breath to answer idle Questions.

Alb. I have resolv'd——your Right, brave Sir, has conquer'd,
[To Edgar.]

Along with me, I must consult your Father.
[Ex. Albany and Edgar.]

Reg. Help every Hand to save a noble Life;
My half o'th' Kingdom for a Man of Skill
To stop this precious stream.

Bast. Away ye Empyricks,
Torment me not with your vain Offices;
The Sword has pierc'd too far; *Legitimacy*
At last has got it.

Reg. The Pride of Nature dyes.

Gen. Away, the minutes are too precious,
Disurb us not with thy impertinent Sorrow.

Reg. Art thou my Rival then profess?

Gen. Why, was our Love a Secret? cou'd there be
Beauty like Mine, and Gallantry like His,
And not a mutual Love? Just Nature then
Had err'd. Behold that Copy of Perfection,
That Youth whose Story will have no foul Page.
But where it says he stoopt to *Pegan's* Arms:
Which yet was but Compliance, not Affection;
A Charity to begging, ruin'd Beauty!

Reg. Who begg'd when *Conril* writ That? expose it,
[Throws her a Letter.]

And let it be your Army's mirth, as 'twas
This charming Youth's and mine, when in the Bow'r
He breath'd the warmest Exstasies of Love;
Then panting on my Breast, cry'd, Matchless *Regan*!
That *Goneril* and thou shou'd e're be Kin!

Gen. Dye, *Circe*, for thy Charms are at an end,
Expire before my face, and let me see
How well that beaſted Beauty will become
Congealing Blood, and Death's convulsive Pangs:
Dye and be hest, for at my Tent last Night
Thou drank'st thy Bane, amidst thy rev'ling Bowls:
Ha! Dost thou Smile? Is then thy Death thy Sport?
Or has the truly Potion made the Mad?

Reg.

Eg. Thou com'st as short of me in thy Revenge
As in my *Gloster's* Love, my Jealousie
Inspir'd me to prevent thy feeble Malice,
And poison thee at thy own Banquet.

Gon. Ha?

Eas. No more, my Queen's, of this untimely Strife,
You both deserv'd my Love, and both possess it.
Come, Soldiers, bear me in; and let
Your Royal Presence grace my last minutes;
Now, *Edgar*, thy proud Conquest I forgive;
Who wou'd not chuse, like me, to yield his Breath
T' have Rival Queens contend for him in Death?

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, A Prison.

Lear asleep, with his Head on Cordelia's Lap.

Cord. What Toils, thou wretched King, hast thou endur'd
To make Thee draw, in Chains, a Sleep so sound?
Thy better Angel charm thy ravisht Mind
With fanci'd Freedom; Peace is us'd to lodge
On Cottage Straw. Thou hast the Beggar's Bed,
Therefore shoud'st have the Beggar's careless Thought.
And now, my *Edgar*, I remember Thee,
What fate has seiz'd Thee in this general Wreck
I know not, but I know thou must be wretched,
Because *Cordelia* holds thee Dear.
O Gods! a sudden Gloom o'erwhelms me, and the Image
Of Death o'er-spreads the Place. — Ha! Who are These?

Enter Captain and Officers with Cords.

Capt. Now, Sirs, dispatch, already you are paid
In part, the best of your Reward's to come.

Lear. Charge, charge upon their Flank, their last Wing halts.
Push, push the Battel, and the Day's our own.
Their Ranks are broke, down with *Albany*.
Who holds my Hands? — O thou deceiving Sleep,
I was this very Minute on the Chace;
And now a Prisoner here. — What mean the Slaves?
You will not murder me?

Cord. Help, Earth and Heaven!
For your Souls sake, dear Sirs, and for the Gods.

Offic. No Tears, good Lady, no pleading against Gold and Preferment.

Come,

Come, Sirs, make ready your Cords.

Cord. You, Sir, I'll seize,
You have a humane Form, and if no Pray'rs
Can touch your Soul to spare a poor Kings Life,
If there be any thing that you hold Dear,
By that I beg you to dispatch me first.

Capt. Comply with her Request ; dispatch her First.

Lear. Off Hell-hounds, by the Gods I charge you spare her,
'Tis my *Cordelia*, my true pious Daughter:
No pity? — Nay, then take an old Mans Vengeance:

Snatches a Partisan, and strikes down two of them ; the rest quit Cordelia, and turn upon him. Enter Edgar and Albany.

Edg. Death ! Hell ! ye Vultures, hold your impious Hands,
Or take a speedier Death than you would give.

Capt. By whose Command ?

Edg. Behold the Duke, your Lord.

Alb. Guards, seize those Instruments of Cruelty.

Cord. My *Edgar*, Oh !

Edg. My Dear *Cordelia* ! Lucky was the Minute
Of our Approach, the Gods have weigh'd our Suff'rings ;
W'are past the Fire, and now must shine to Ages.

Gent. Look here, my Lord, see where the generous King
Has slain two of 'em.

Lear. Did I not, Fellow ?
I've seen the Day, with my good biting Faulchion
I could have made 'em skip ; I am Old now,
And these vile Crosses spoil me ; out of Breath ?
Fie, Oh ! quite out of Breath, and spent.

Alb. Bring in old *Kent* ; and, *Edgar*, guide you higher
Your Father, whom you said was near,

[*Ex. Edgar.*

He may be an Ear-witness at the least
Of our proceedings.

[*Kent brought in here.*

Lear. Who are you ?

My Eyes are none o'th' Best, I'll tell you straight ;
Oh *Albany* ! Well, Sir, we are your Captives,
And you are come to see Death pass upon us.
Why this Delay ? — or is't your Highness pleasure
To give us first the Tortour ? Say ye so ?
Why here's old *Kent* and I, as tough a Pair
As e're bore Tyrants Stroke : — But my *Cordelia*,
My poor *Cordelia* here, O pity ! —

Alb. Take off their Chains. — Thou injur'd Majesty,
The Wheel of Fortune now has made her Circle,

And Blessings yet stand 'twixt thy Grave and Thee.

Lear. Com'st thou, inhumane Lord, to sooth us back
To a Fool's Paradise of Hope, to make
Our Doom more wretched? Go to, we are too well
Acquainted with Misfortune to be gull'd
With Lying Hope; No, we will hope no more.

Alb. I have a tale, r' unfold so full of Wonder
As cannot meet an easie Faith;
But by that Royal injur'd Head 'tis True

Kent. What wou'd your Highness?

Alb. Know, the Noble *Edgar*
Impeacht Lord *Edmund* since the Fight, of Treason
And dar'd him for the Proof to single Combat;
In which the Gods confirm'd his Charge by Conquest;
I left ev'n now the Traitor wounded mortally.

Lear. And whither tends this Story?

Alb. E'er they fought

Lord *Edgar* gave into my Hands this Paper,
A blacker Scrowl of Treason, and of Lust,
Than can be found in the Records of Hell;
There, Sacred Sir, behold the Character
Of *Goneril* the worst of Daughters, but
More vicious Wife.

Cord. Cou'd there be yet Addition to their Guilt?
What will not They that wrong a Father do?

Alb. Since then my Injuries, *Lear*, fall in with Thine,
I have resolv'd the same Redress for both.

Kent. What says my Lord?

Cord. Speak, for me thought I heard
The charming Voice of a descending God.

Alb. The Troops by *Edmund* rais'd, I have disbanded;
Those that remain are under my Command.

What Comfort may be brought to cheer your Age,
And heal your Savage Wrongs, shall be apply'd;
For to your Majesty we do resign
Your Kingdom, save what part your Self confer'd
On us in Marriage.

Kent. Hear you that, my Liege?

Cord. Then they are Gods, and Vertue is their Care.

Lear. Is't possible?

Let the Spheres stop their Course, the Sun make halt,
The winds be hush'd, the Seas and Fountains rest;
All Nature pause, and listen to the Change.
Where is my *Kent*, my *Cajus*?

Kent. Here my Liege.

Lear. Why I have News that will recall thy Youth;

Ha! Didst thou hear't, or did th' inspiring Gods
Whisper to me alone? Old *Lear* shall be
A King again.

Kent. The Prince that Like a God has Pow'r, has said it.

Lear. *Cordelia* then shall be a Queen, mark that:
Cordelia shall be a Queen; Winds catch the Sound,
And bear it on your rolie Wings to Heav'n.
Cordelia is a Queen.

Re-enter Edgar with Gloster.

Alb. Look, Sir, where Pious *Edgar* comes,
Leading his Eye-less Father: O my Liege!
His wondrous Story will deserve your Leisure;
What he has done and suffer'd for your Sake,
What for the fair *Cordelia*'s.

Gloster. Where is my Liege? Conduct me to his Knees, to hail
His second Birth of Empire; my dear *Edgar*
Has, with himself, reveal'd the King's blest Restauration.

Lear. My poor dark *Gloster*;

Gloster. O let me kiss that once more Sceptred Hand!

Lear. Hold, Thou mistak'st the Majesty, kneel here;
Cordelia has our Pow'r, *Cordelia*'s Queen.
Speak, is not that the noble Suff'ring *Edgar*?

Gloster. My pious Son, more dear than my lost Eyes!

Lear. I wrong'd him too; but here's the fair Amends.

Edg. Your Leave, my Liege, for an unwelcome Message.

Edmund (but that's a Trifle) is expir'd;
What more will touch you, your imperious Daughters
Goneril and haughty *Regan*, both are Dead,
Each by the other poison'd at a Banquet;
This, Dying, they confess.

Cord. O fatal Period of ill-govern'd Life!

Lear. Ingrateful as they were, my Heart feels yet
A Pang of Nature for their wretched Fall, — —
But, *Edgar*, I defer thy Joys too long:

Thou serv'dst distressed *Cordelia*; take her Crown'd:
Th' imperial Grace fresh blooming on her Brow;
Nay, *Gloster*, Thou hast here a Father's Right,
Thy helping Hand t' heap Blessings on their Heads.

Kent. Old *Kent* throws in his hearty Wishes too.

Edg. The Gods and You too largely recompence
What I have done; the Gift strikes Merit dumb.

Cord. Nor do I blush to own my self o'er-paid
For all my suff'rings past.

Gloster. Now, gentle Gods, give *Gloster* his discharge.

Lear. No, *Gloster*, Thou hast business yet for Life;
Thou, *Kent*, and I, retir'd to some close Cell
Will gently pass our short reserves of Time
In calm Reflections on our Fortunes past,
Cheer'd with Relation of the prosperous Reign
Of this celestial Pair; Thus our Remains
Shall in an even Course of Thought be past,
Enjoy the present Hour, nor fear the Last.

Edg. Our drooping Country now erects her Head,
Peace spreads her balmy Wings, and Plenty blooms.
Divine *Cordelia*, all the Gods can Witness
How much thy Love to Empire I prefer!
Thy bright Example shall convince the World
(Whatever Storms of Fortune are decreed)
That Truth and Vertue shall at last succeed.

[*Ex. Omnes.*]

F I N I S.

EPILOGUE, Spoken by Mrs. Barry.

I Nconstancy, the reigning Sin o' th' Age,
Will scarce endure true Lov'rs on the Stage,
You hardly ev'n in Plays with such dispence;
And Poet. kill 'em in their own Defense.
Yet one bold Proof I was resolv'd to give,
That I cou'd three Hours Constancy out live.
You fear, perhaps, whilst on th' Stage we are made
Such Saints, we shall indeed take up the Trade;
Sometimes we Threat'n, — but our Virtue may
For Truth I fear with your Pit-Valour weigh:
For (not to flatter either) I much Doubt
When we are off the Stage, and you are out,
We are not quite so Coy, nor you so Stout.
We talk of Nunn'ries, — But to be sincere
Whoever lives to see us cloister'd there,
May hope to me t' our Critick at Tanager.
For shame give over this inglorious Trade
Of m'rying Poets, and go maul th' Alcade.
Well — — since y' are all for blustering in the Pit,
This Play's reviver humbly do's admit
Your absolute Pow'r to damn his part of it:
But still so many Master-Touches shine
Of that vast Hand that first laid this Design,
That in great Shakespear's Right, He's bold to say,
If you like nothing you have seen to Day.
The Pay your Judgment duns, not you th' Play.

F I N I S.

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Hist of King Lear.

alt^d by Geo Colman

1768

Is a Duplicate with M. S. attestation for
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